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THE WORLD'S EPOCH-MAKERS

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OLIPHANT SMEATON

Marcus Aurelius

and the Later Stoics

By F. W. Bussell, D.D.

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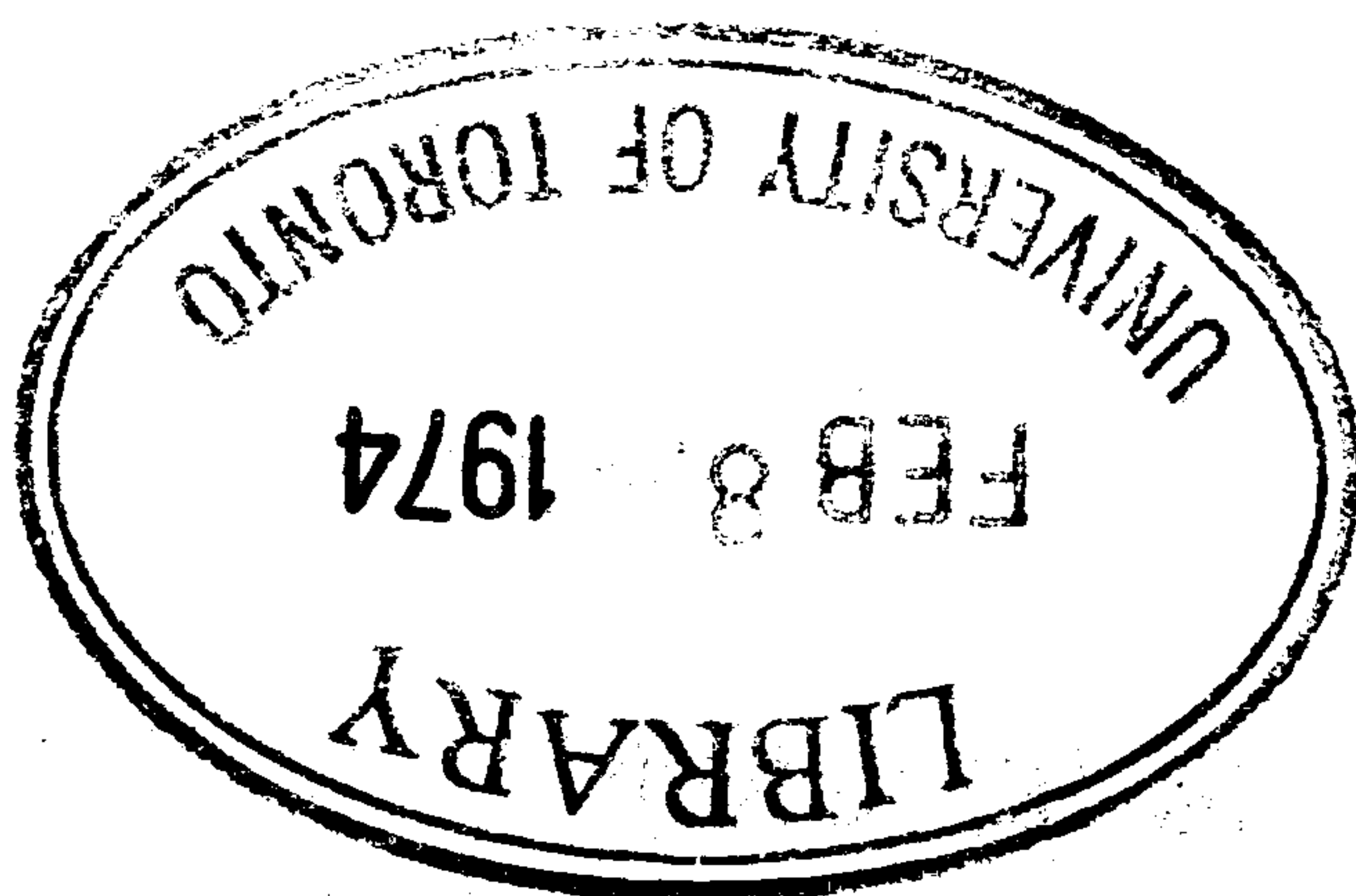
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VIRI AMABILIS ET DESIDERATISSIMI

A. H. J. GREENIDGE

MANIBUS,
QUI ME AMICA NI
AD HOC OPUS CURANDUM
IMPULIT, ET
INDUSTRIÆ SUÆ
INENARRABILIS EXEMPLO
EX DESIDIA EXCITAVIT

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THIS little book will betray the length of time it has been under consideration by several allusions to modern events which are now anachronisms. But I have preferred to leave the text as I wrote it some time ago; and to make no change in the estimate of the Stoic teachers, although in some respects my own standpoint is not the same. On the whole, it agrees fairly well with the valuation of a pure Monism set forth in the 'Bampton Lectures' of 1905; and I am glad of an opportunity of supplementing and supporting the general statements made there by this detailed inquiry into two or three of the most eminent and sincere expounders of an untenable creed.

MUNDHAM HOUSE,
NORFOLK,
December 1909.

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MARCUS AURELIUS AND THE LATER STOICISM

PART I. INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

“THE ROMAN EMPEROR”

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *The Roman Empire an extempore expedient.*
- § 2. *The Emperor a Republican official, not a King; no recognition of the hereditary principle.*
- § 3. *The Empire above Nationality.*
- § 4. *Vagueness of Imperial ideal allowed oscillation between civil and military conception; the Cæsar represented the Spirit of the Age in his choice.*
- § 5. *Dual aspect of the Emperor as “Overlord” of the provinces (where his personal caprice modified by continuity of tradition, by policy of non-intervention, and by local autonomy); and as “Princeps” and Delegate of the Senate.*
- § 6. *Honest attempts of “Five good Emperors” to rule as Presidents of a Free State (96–180 A.D.); history of its subsequent failure (180–285 A.D.).*
- § 7. *This period an exceptional epoch, devoted to the problem of the Reconciliation of the Dyarchy.*
- § 8. *Disappointing results of M. Aurelius’ reign and character due in part to the sadness of his philosophical speculations.*

No political system that man's ingenuity has invented can ever equal in interest for us the Roman Empire. Like the British Constitution, it was the slow growth of time. Julius and Augustus contributed, in large measure and in answer to a tired world's demand, to this unification, this centralizing of authority in a single city and a single ruler; but they could never have dreamt of the full significance of their work. Augustus, indeed, to the very close of his life cloaked his power under a pretence of extempore expediency; and masterly though this policy was in disarming the old classical prejudice against a "tyranny," yet much of the suspicion and discord, the mutinies and bloodshed, which succeeded, was due to the singular indefiniteness and ambiguity of his new Constitution, which under the old titles and magistracies concealed a complete revolution. He could never have foreseen that this hasty attempt to reconcile the traditions of the past with the needs of the present, would become permanent in his own Empire, and, after it had passed away, would appear at all subsequent times of human history as the visionary Ideal towards which the aspirations of our race are directed. The paradoxes, but imperfectly disguised by the Imperial mantle, involved inconsistencies so absurd and so fundamental, that we wonder how the system survived for ten years the inquiry of reasonable men. Yet a stability seems to have attended it, which from experience we know is denied to the paper constitution and definite formulæ of modern theoretic government.

§ 2. The Roman Empire was never a monarchy in the strict sense; to the very end the word "Respublica" took precedence of the title of the despot, who con-

trolled and frequently enslaved it. In spite of the Imperial apotheosis (little understood, and often misappreciated), in spite of the obscure inviolability of the Tribunitian power, no special sanctity surrounded the representative of the people. The “nation,” a vague name sometimes embodied in the Senate, sometimes in the tumultuous shouts of frontier legions, was the real and ultimate repository of all lawful power; and we marvel that in all the patient and accurate legislation of the Imperial epoch no attempt was made to define with exactness the duties, the prerogatives, the rights of succession, the dynastic claims, the methods of election, of that central point upon which this wheel of government and society revolved. The divinity, which to our modern eyes “doth hedge a king,” the peculiar respect in speech and address, the reverence to the person of a monarch, the accumulated titles of honour,—all these were utterly lacking. We have enormously increased the prestige, the sacrosanct character of our modern sovereigns, though it may be at the cost of their prerogative. Their influence is all the greater, because it is indirect. The Cæsar, elected by a free choice, and possessing of himself no single claim to sovereignty, was the trusted minister of Democracy, and atoned for failure with his life. “The King can do no wrong”; “Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!” are two principles which lie at the background of the stability of Europe, and are by no means mere sentiments or convenient fictions of the law. Yet they involve ideas which a Roman in the most servile period would have repudiated with scorn. We have raised monarchs above the strife of party, above the bitterness of rival factions, into a serener atmosphere;

and when the history of the Nineteenth Century is compiled by dispassionate critics, it will be seen how largely we have augmented the influence while circumscribing the direct power of the Crown. As late as the reign of Maurice (582–602), Theophylact could proudly boast of the contrast between the “legal and constitutional government” of the Byzantine, and the capricious despotism of the irresponsible Chosroes. And this, after the policy of the rough but astute Diocletian, of Constantine, and still more definitely of Justinian, had set itself to centralize, to seclude, to consecrate the monarchical idea, after the pattern of Oriental courts. Nor did the hereditary principle meet with recognition throughout this period of fifteen centuries. Nothing is more remarkable than the safe security of the family and relations of a deposed or murdered emperor. They sank unnoticed into private life; no vengeance associated them in the misdeeds of their kinsman; no discontented faction saw a pretext for sedition in their indisputable claims to Imperial rank. If we examine the “dynasties” of this period from Augustus to Constantine XIV., we shall observe how common was the peaceful succession of son, of brother, or of nephew to the throne; and the page of history is full of ephemeral families, each one increasing in duration and stability, till at the close, the Comneni and the Palæologi divide between them nearly four hundred years. But it must be continually remembered that this involved no recognition whatever of the hereditary principle, as we understand it to-day. The “Holy Roman Empire” became monopolized by a single family in later times, without ever expressly denying that the highest secular office in Europe was open to any



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stronger in our hearts, as it is more genuine than a vague cosmopolitan sympathy, which so often amounts merely to the acceptance of certain theoretical propositions, indifference to immediate duties. To this feeling, this generous emotion, the Empire, whether mediæval or ancient, was an absolute stranger. The Empire was the denial of nationality. The "Civis Romanus" was one who enjoyed a supra-national privilege. He was a Spaniard, a Neapolitan, a Cyrenian, a Syrian; but he was something more. The gradual extension of what may be termed the "franchise" advanced to its goal of complete comprehensiveness (under an Antonine, in 213 A.D.) along with the decay of the Roman race. In its narrower significance, the Roman family became extinct. The legitimate children by birth were succeeded by the adopted family of all "nations under heaven"; and adoption constituted in the ancient world a tie no less sacred and binding than did physical descent. Thus the Empire is completely ignorant of the modern notions of *kingship*, of *heredity*, of *nationality*. It attempts to conceal the absolute powers which it places in the hands of representatives, and seems ashamed or afraid to define them. The Emperor is merely the first subject of this comprehensive and invisible State. He embodies the people's wishes, aspirations, and authority; but he exercises a sacred trust which has been freely delegated to a chief magistrate. He is a steward, not an owner. In the son of Cæsar there exists no inherent pre-supposition or pretension to office. And the political system founded on the very negation of nationalism or separateness, formed a bond of union between tribes and civilizations the most adverse and distinct,—an

intangible network which held together in harmony and peace the last centuries of the decaying peoples of classical antiquity.

§ 4. Enough has been said to suffice as a general introduction to that “Imperium” of which Marcus Aurelius Antoninus was so bright an ornament. We shall try to portray the work, the character, the influence of this ruler; and in attempting to estimate his place, either as a thinker or a governor, the remarks which precede will be found by no means superfluous. Among the various attempts made by generals or statesmen on their accession to define this strangely vague dignity, none was more noble or conscientious than the policy of the five good Emperors whose names have brightened that period of repose, and perhaps of lethargy, which seemed to Gibbon the “happiest” age in human records. The reigning Cæsar, finding few precedents and generally armed with a “mandate,” silent or expressed, to reverse and stigmatize his predecessor’s methods, was at liberty to give prominence to whichever of his dual positions he preferred. He might, even in time of peace, incline towards an Absolutism supported by the Sword; or, rejecting the title Imperator, he might live and govern as “princeps,” as “primus inter pares,” among his peers, the Senatorial fathers. In this oscillation, greatly though this change was due to the character of the Emperor and his predilections for republican or military ideals, yet there can be no doubt that in whatever capacity, he represented the temper of the Roman world—that public opinion and that plain-spokenness of the populace which was tolerated even under the most savage reigns. Probably no government has ever existed unless favoured

and approved by the larger part of its subjects. The seditious may be clear-voiced and bold, but they always constitute a minority. The approval of the citizens may be due to the sheer inertia of indolence or ignorance, or the profound doubt that any change can be for the better. An infinitesimal fraction of the Russians have more than once imperilled a system which is set firm on the piety and veneration of the vast bulk of the nation. The Sultan of Turkey, in spite of the protests of a "Young Turkey" faction, is acceptable to his subjects. The government of France, which offers a frivolous nation the comparatively harmless sport of a ministerial crisis in place of regicide and the fall of dynasties, reposes undoubtedly upon the negative and contemptuous consent of the people. The Tudor Sovereigns, perhaps more cruel in their suspicions of our noble houses than any Cæsar, had the unfailing support of their subjects, and live in their grateful memory. Similarly, the Roman Emperors seem at each moment to embody the dominant spirit of the age, and perhaps rather to follow than to lead. Trained for the most part in no princely seclusion, but moving freely as soldiers or citizens among a free-speaking people, acceding to a dignity which rarely dazzled them, they brought to the throne the tastes, the studies, the predilections of a private station; and gave unconscious expression to the popular voice, and clearer utterance to vague murmurs of discontent.

§ 5. Great as was the power of Cæsar, his personality was perhaps of less account than the character of the Constitutional monarch of to-day. The provinces of Rome, where the real life and progress of the Empire continued, were indifferent to the occupant of the throne.

Though the Roman civil service never degenerated into a bureaucracy, yet there was a continuity of tradition, a uniformity of procedure, which never snapt, though the idea of sovereignty was incarnate in a rough Dacian peasant or an effeminate Syrian boy; though on the frontiers the transient phantoms in the purple baffle the assiduity of Numismatics. The secret of Roman greatness was her respect for individual rights and local autonomy. The central government was to be strong and vigilant for the public cause, but it was to honour the liberties of the governed, and above all never to interfere in those debatable and uncertain matters which, as indifferent to the public order, are best left to individual taste. The New Testament from Pilate to Festus is full of eloquent testimony to the forbearance and toleration of the Roman official, and his instinctive sense of the limits of government and the restrictions which should be placed upon State interference. Rome, unfairly weighted with the odium of the Ten Persecutions of the Christians, is yet the first State that discovered and practised religious tolerance. The ear of the Emperor was an infallible and uncorrupt court of final appeal; but his vigilance did not obtrude itself, nor did his authority mischievously supersede the ancient local systems.

Seneca (*De Clem.*) is addressing his master during the “golden age” of the Quinquennium; yet these words might well epitomize the general view of Roman administration during its whole supremacy. I. 2: “Multa illos cogunt ad hanc confessionem (esse felices), quâ nulla in homine tardior est; securitas alta, affluens; jus supra omnem injuriam positum. . . . Lætissima forma RP^œ, cui ad summam libertatem nihil deest nisi

pereundi licentia.” And of the conception of the Imperial position; I. 3: “quem omnes non tam *supra* se esse quam *pro* se sciunt”: and the familiar metaphor, “Quemadm. totum corpus animo deservit. . . . Sic hæc immensa multitudo unius animæ circumdata (enveloping like the body the soul of a single man) illius spiritu regitur, illius ratione flectitur. . . . 4. Ille est enim vinculum per quod RP. cohæret; ille spiritus vitalis, quem hæc tot millia trahunt, nihil ipsa per se futura nisi onus et præda si mens illa Imperii subtrahatur. 5. Animus RP^æ tu es, illa corpus tuum.” The whole temper of the more acquiescent Roman and the attitude of the provincials towards the new regimen, is probably well contained in the following:—Ep. lxxiii.: “Ille vir sincerus ac purus qui reliquit et curiam et forum et omnem admin^{em} RP^æ ut ad ampliora secederet, diligit eos per quos hoc ci facere tutò licet . . . magnam rem nescientibus debet . . . sub quorum tutela positus exercet artes bonas.”

If the wisdom of the British is content to leave the anomaly of over six hundred separate and distinct administrations in India, we have learned this lesson from the Roman. The Roman world was no loosely-knit congeries of independent satrapies: behind the apparent licence of the urban life of Asia Minor was the strong hand of the central authority, watchful yet seldom obtrusive. The supreme merit of the system was due to this self-control, which for the first time in history curbed and restricted the interference of government, encouraged native traditions and creeds, and avoided that dangerous lethargy which a professional bureaucracy and over-minute supervision tend to produce in some modern States. Thus the Empire clearly had two faces,

like Janus, the one as the benevolent and impartial warden of the world's peace; the other, in its stricter relation to its immediate environment, the Senate of Rome. The Emperor was the “overlord” of a multiplicity of States, who found union symbolized and guaranteed in his person; but he was, besides, the supreme magistrate in a municipality. The individuality of Cæsar mattered little in the provinces; but his momentary temper was all-important in Rome. While Tacitus devotes almost exclusive attention to the seditions of terrified Senators, who might thwart but could scarcely help Cæsar's Imperial ideas; while Suetonius interests his readers in the petty and malicious gossip of the Court, we must look elsewhere for the real effect of the new system, and explain from other sources the gratitude and the homage which it called forth.

§ 6. We have said that the Prince could on his accession emphasize at his will the civil or the military side of sovereignty; and that in making this choice he represented more truly than an heir-apparent to-day the general wish or public sentiment. The advent of Vespasian and the Flavian “dynasty” was in complete harmony with middle-class feeling. “Peace, retrenchment, and reform” was the watchword of a tired society after the startling extravagance and heroic vices of the Claudian house. Unfortunate misunderstanding drove the last of this family, an able administrator of a gloomy and suspicious temper, into that undying feud with the Senate which Tacitus so eloquently describes in the opening chapters of the “Agricola.” The tone of Roman society and aspirations in 96 A.D. became once more overtly and distinctly Republican. The period of nearly

one hundred years was marked by an honest attempt on the part of the adoptive Emperors to govern as Presidents of a free State. Trajan managed to hold in solution the diverse elements of military enterprise and deference to the consultative Body, which still remained in name the "fount of honour," and the source of the delegated authority which he exercised, whether in camp or court. Hadrian, who represents the restless "Wanderjahre" in this epoch's life, had reason to suspect the loyalty of the Senate, but he rarely disregarded their dignity. Antoninus the First, one of those tranquil, artless, and almost saintly characters that raise to the throne the domestic virtues, and influence not by ability, but by pure simplicity of life and aim, continued in his eventless reign the same policy of modesty and deference. Antoninus the Second (or Marcus Aurelius), in whom the period closes not without sad and melancholy foreboding of a lonely old age, was fully persuaded of the ultimate authority of the Senate, though he must have confessed to himself that as an engine of government it was supine and incapable. With his death and the ominous (perhaps apocryphal) threat to Commodus, "The Senate sends you this!" ended the dream of reconciliation between the two disparate members of the Dyarchy. The African Dynasty of Severus (bearing in the character, annals, and fortunes of its members so strange a resemblance to the Flavian) broke entirely with this tradition; and the counsel, "Gain the Army and despise all else," became the charter of his successors. The apparent restoration under Severus II. was formal and ineffective. The senatorial nominees, Pupienus and Balbinus—or Tacitus some forty years later—were scarcely fitted to the requirements of the time. The offer of Æmilianus



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authority of the Roman people;¹ and that the Emperors were but the chosen executive or delegates to carry out their will during their good pleasure. The two Antonines were ideal representatives of this anomalous system, which sought to veil autocracy under republican forms in exact contradiction of the modern scheme, which expresses in despotic formulæ the limited or vicarious action of a constitutional monarch. In both there is a deception which deceives no one; but we may well consider whether Bolingbroke is right, who maintains that disguised absolutism veiled under popular forms is more dangerous than the open exercise of power, without any pretence of concealment. Brought up from early years in the atmosphere of a Court, the second Antonine had avoided many of its temptations and learnt much of its responsibilities. The peculiar danger of one "born in the purple" (*πορφυρογεννητός*), which seems the clear lesson of the career of Commodus, is contradicted (like most historic generalisations) by the example of his father. The filial regard of Aurelius for Antoninus (to call them by their familiar titles) was sincere and unaffected. He succeeded, first among the Emperors, not only to a throne secured by a profound loyalty, but to duties already well defined; and he was spared, by pious glances at his model, much uncertainty in the conduct of affairs,—that uncertainty as to the significance and limits of power which embittered the character of Tiberius, and sowed the seeds of incurable hatred in so many promising reigns between the assembly and the executive, their chosen but distrusted representative. His reign was distinguished by no great ad-

¹ As later, in the College of Cardinals, the inherent right of all Christians to choose the Supreme Pontiff.

ministrative reform, no eventful campaigns. His wars were confined to the frontiers of the Augustan Empire, which Trajan had vainly attempted to enlarge; and interest us only because they seem to forebode the great Barbarian movements of the coming centuries. The absolute stillness which enfolds the reign of Antoninus is certainly broken under his successor by the din of arms and the alarms of sedition. Avidius Cassius is the already familiar type of ambitious provincial governor who instigates a military “pronunciamento”; but he may interest us as showing that Aurelius failed to secure the allegiance of the troops, while he failed to rouse new life and energy in the Senate. The desultory and futile campaign in Persia (with which this mutiny was connected) merely marks the recrudescence of that eternal quarrel between East and West which in this form lasted for seven hundred years, and produced in all that time no lasting alteration of frontier. In internal policy I must not forget the beneficial legislation for the weaker part of the community, which, derived from no classical ideal, depended upon a mixture of humanitarian Stoicism and unseen Christian influences; and to both these the Roman mind was peculiarly susceptible. But we may look in vain for any important contribution to the fabric of the Roman Imperial system; and, while respecting the principle of heredity, we must regret that Aurelius could not have foreseen the abuse of power in unworthy hands, and have rendered harmless the uncontrolled caprice of later times.

§ 8. Marcus Aurelius has thus certainly left no permanent mark upon the development of the Imperial ideal. His influence upon his successors was slight. The tranquil figure of Antoninus exercised a far more

potent fascination; and a shadowy Dynasty of affectionate respect issued from him, ending in disgrace in Heliogabalus, who may be reckoned the eighth who bore, and perhaps the third who sullied, that honourable name. Julian, in his "Cæsars," treats him with astonishing irony, and seems to forget that the imperial Stoic is the model for the imperial Cynic.¹ Among his own friends, within his own family, we must regret the little weight which his character or his teaching carried.² Something in his nature disqualified the noblest of Romans, the very pattern of sovereigns, from impressing the age with the permanent stamp of his influence. If we wish to appreciate this failure aright, we must turn from the public duties of the Emperor to the inner soul of the man, which lies bared before us in his "Meditations." There, self-revealed, as perhaps in the case of no other monarch,³ we have the record of his life and spiritual conflict. It is when we pass to the philosophic opinions of Aurelius that we meet some partial explanation for his failure as a monarch or a reformer. We shall have to review the various stages by which Philosophy, that dangerous and seductive foe of the Common Life, penetrated the Roman mind, and attempted to pervade Roman society. In the Quietism, which the Stoics brought with them from the East, we shall discover

¹ Sextus Aurelius, it is true, speaks in his customary terms of vapid eulogy, here, perhaps, with greater genuineness.

² Mr. Pater, who has, if we may hazard a guess, produced with an unerring and inimitable instinct the peculiar "atmosphere" of the Antoninian age, represents the secret doubts and amusement of the Emperor's audience, when he lectured to them on the Stoic philosophy.

³ I except the naïve and creditable autobiography of the Mogul conqueror Babar; whose example the present Amir of Afghanistan and the Gaekwar of Baroda would seem to emulate.

the most satisfactory clue to the sadness of the Imperial speculator,—to the unwilling disappointment which his writings and his life must finally arouse in all those who love him for his unselfish devotion, his goodness of heart, his unaffected sincerity.

CHAPTER II

“THE STOIC PHILOSOPHER”

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *Greek Philosophy (in the sphere of conduct) is foreign in its origin, and abstentionist; aims at discovering a Law or a Unity beyond conventional Sanctions and the City-State.*
- § 2. *Classical Greek temper delights in variety; but Greek Thought desires a Unity, which as beyond the Multiple, becomes pure Negation.*
- § 3. *Philosophical Quietism in contrast to vigorous democratic life.*
- § 4. *Disappointment of the Sage who in the supposed new domain of Freedom encounters resistance and incalculable forces.*
- § 5. *A Practical “Unity” achieved in the political world by Alexander and by Augustus; Roman aristocrats, condemned to idleness and introspection by the new government, join the party of abstention and indifference.*
- § 6. *Their “Supreme Unity,” at first Fate or Destiny, and implying futility of endeavour, becomes a religion of devotional yet despairing Theism.*
- § 7. *Roman Philosophy as Syncretist and Eclectic; with little emphasis on Absolute Truth, and much on casuistry and individual needs; the dogmatic materialist becomes an agnostic and a mystic.*
- § 8. *Chief features of the eclectic writers in the first two centuries, Christian and Pagan.*
- § 9. *Concentration on the Inner Life as the sole reality.*
- § 10. *Stoical doctrine transformed according to personal character of its chief Roman exponents, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius.*

§ 1. GREEK Philosophy cannot be called a native product of Greek soil, or a spontaneous and original

creation of the Greek mind. It sprang up in those fringes of Hellenic civilization which bordered the barbarian peoples, whether in Thrace, in Italy, in Sicily, or in Asia Minor. Obscure and alien influences combined to give it that peculiar complexion which it bore to the end of its history. Vague hints and dark legends connect every prominent sage with a visit to Egypt, and a fabled intercourse with the priests of an esoteric religion. In Greece proper we meet with the late though splendid names of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle; but the earliest discoverers and the later successors of the Golden and Athenian age were foreigners. The whole tone and temper of speculation from first to last is sharply contrasted with those features of Greek social and political life which are most familiar to us. From the outset this stream of thought ran counter to the classical instincts, and to the needs and aspirations of Hellenic life and culture. The Athenian period, marked by a bold attempt to unite the two unsociable sides (“*principatum ac libertatem*”), ended, nevertheless, in the complete disclosure of their final incompatibility. Philosophy in its birth is essentially Romantic; and subjective impressions take the place of exterior law. True it is that the very aim of Reflexion is to justify and explain this outer law to the subject, and to accept voluntarily speculations which had been imposed before upon slaves. For by the intrinsic nature of Reason or Dialectic, separatist yet unifier, all these reach a unity in the world of nature and of thought, by a comparison of the various organs of intelligence or a more or less patient scrutiny of physical processes; by a sifting away of the nondescript, the particular, until the pure but rarefied form appeared; by overcoming

the extravagant conceit of individual thinkers or impressionists, in a discovery of a fixed norm of all rational unanimity.

§ 2. But it is instructive to trace in history the failure of all such attempts to arrive at a unity of conciliation between the universal and the individual reason. Difference (so dear to the Greek spirit, so distasteful to its mature reflexion) obtruded itself in every sphere, where a final harmony was promised; and the unity, if and when attained, proved to be void of content, for the supreme Reality was indistinguishable from negation. This search, which is the necessary function of unifying reason, was pursued with quiet persistency, until we lose sight of Hellenic sobriety and orderliness in the raptures and ecstasies of the bastard Platonism. Reflexion, in its earliest stirrings due to barbarian influences, suggested *unity* as the fitting goal for human thought and endeavour; while the Greek temper delighted in *variety*, whether in art, or poetry, or politics; a variety which was not mere disorderly licence or caprice,—which in the end knew no other restraints but those of native good taste and good feeling. In the sage, the two conflicting tendencies constantly confront one another no less than in society; and the peace of mind of the one is sacrificed no less than the harmony of the other. The whole essence of the creative and progressive Hellenic life was liberty and equality. In the commonwealth of City-States (I do not speak here of the monastic rigour of the Dorians and a common worship), loosely united by a traditional ancestry, and in the ordinary life of any one of the group, whether colony or metropolis, variegation was the chief characteristic. It was signi-



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“man of the hour” in Greek tyrannies, or the colossal figure of the Persian King, must fall with sombre influence over these blithe and prosperous communities, before men can sit apart to muse on the substance of all things, the futility of existence, and the negative ethic of abstention and of quietism. It would be interesting (though here out of place) to trace the share which this consciousness of an unholy or a lawful *unity* exercised in the production of the reflecting habit among the Greeks. Certain it is that this thought, no less than the spectacle of factious democracy, largely contributed to the development of philosophy; which from the first set itself to correct, to deride, or to supersede, by some deeper explanation than unconscious universal consent, the conventional fabric of society and of government. This feud, once started, was never again healed, and the practical outcome on the cities of the Hellenic world of so much meditation and dispute, may be confined to the aristocratic communities of Pythagoras and the personal influence of Socrates; whose life as an obedient citizen, whose death as a martyr to truth and to patriotic duty, served only to emphasize the more vividly the discord of the two spheres. The reason for this distrust and suspicion is not far to seek. The desire for a personal and individual apprehension of truth, apart from the sacred ministrations and mediation of the Family-State, seemed as impious to their eyes as the claim to immediate revelation by Protestant or Mystic, to the devout Catholic to-day. The conservatism of unreflecting obedience (whether in a tyrant or in an Aristophanes) waged a truceless warfare against the seekers after a higher sanction. The religious, whose belief was limited to poetic tradition, whose

practice was bounded by the ceremonies and festivals of the State's authorization, saw nothing but impiety in the deeper scrutiny, which refused to acquiesce in the divinity of the obvious, and attempted to bring some concord into the turbulence of Olympus. The practical men of business and affairs viewed with grave disapprobation the withdrawal of so many hours of a citizen's life into the meditative idleness or querulous disputes of the sage's leisure. Even the popular ridicule or dislike betrayed on numberless petty occasions the uneasy sense of the community that Philosophy was the chief enemy of social life; that the calm and impartial discussion of those self-evident axioms on which a State is founded, must in the end prove a sceptical solvent, fatal to all law and principle, whether of love in the family, of devotion to the commonwealth, or respect for the divine beings whose worship the State enjoined. This was not an evanescent prejudice of the Hellenic mind, which disappeared after a proper familiarity with true wisdom. It was an age-long temper, which never wavered in its distrust; until indeed philosophy, in the inactively tolerant and pacific period of the Roman Empire, became a mere synonym for a brilliant ability in extempore harangues, or an antiquarian and comparative study of the dogmatic tenets of the schools. In the age of the Antonines the four principal sects could exist together on amicable terms, and enjoy the Imperial liberality without disgracing such bounty by their quarrels. For by that time the pretentious claim of Philosophy to guide human life had in effect yielded to the more modest and indirect, but genuine and effectual, direction of Rome. But in its earlier days Philosophy was in continual opposition

to the Hellenic and classical spirit. Arising in foreign soil and under alien influences, it demanded an exclusive allegiance to a code above the current conceptions of duty; and it tended, under cover of practical maxims, to withdraw the student from effort or endeavour into a life of contemplation and inactivity.¹

§ 4. Above all, Philosophy, while it taught the self-sufficiency of the wise man and promised him liberty to expatiate in a larger sphere than the State, yet in truth only deprived him of the innocent excitement and useful duties of social routine, and enslaved him to the more comprehensive unity which it professed to discover. In effect he became the sport of natural forces, or the organ of impersonal reason, or the citizen of a supposed kingdom of the universe, a cosmopolitan, with ill-defined and often purely negative duties. Leaving the sole realm where human virtue can be efficient, and can, even in failure, look forward to future progress or reform with unselfish joy, the sage found himself in the presence of forces which he could not control or indeed understand. In seeking freedom in the develop-

¹ The irony of the whole Stoic position is admirably but unconsciously displayed by Seneca, *Tranq. Animi*, § 1: "Sequor Zenonem Cleanthem Chrysippum; quorum tamen nemo ad Rempublicam accessit, nemo non misit. *De Otio vel Secessu*. 30. Duæ maxime in hac re dissident Sectæ, Epic. et Stoicorum; sed utraque *ad otium diversa viâ mittit*. Epicurus ait: non accedet ad RP. Sapiens nisi si quid intervenerit. Zeno ait: Accedet ad RP. nisi si quid impedierit. Alter otium ex proposito petit, alter ex causa. Causa autem illa latè patet; Si RP. corruptior est . . . si occupata est malis; non nitetur Sapiens in supervacuum, nec se nihil profuturus impendit."

32. "Nos certe sumus qui dicimus et Zenonem et Chrysippum majora egisse quam si duxissent exercitus, gessissent honores, leges tulissent quas non uni civitati sed toti humano generi tulere." And throughout the little treatise, in dividing life's possible aims into *voluptas*, *contemplatio*, *actio*, it is clear where his real sympathies are.

ment of his personality, he only learnt that freedom and personality are alike illusions. Philosophy, although it has often proved a noble ally, is in some sort a protest against the finality of domestic and social life. It charms man with hopes of a higher companionship, which, alas! in the end are to be reached only by laying down what is distinctively human in the philosopher, by abandoning what is especially his own, in the ecstasy of the Divine “Unio.”

§ 5. Historically, the Union, the higher world which they sought for, was the achievement of Alexander for one brilliant moment, and of Rome perhaps for all time, whether as a secular or a spiritual monarchy.

Rendall (ch. iv., lxxxv.): “The conquests of Alexander changed the moral as well as the political outlook of Hellenism; for, ethically as well as socially, it became impossible any longer to regard the πόλις as the supreme unit of morality.” The undoubted decline of democratic zest at the entrance of the twentieth century may be attributed, partly, to the discovery that social problems and inequalities are independent of the suffrage and representative institutions; partly, and in great measure, to that Imperialism which expatiates in a larger world, and unconsciously relaxes the tension of mind into civic duties, and consoles the poor and oppressed for present misery by a hallucination of foreign power. I cannot here refrain from the pleasure of quoting this sentence, lxxxviii.: “As Stoicism sprang historically out of the suppression of Greek City-States by the expansion of Greece into the world-empire of Alexander; so, too, its second birth in Italy heralds the Imperial stage in the destinies of the great republic.” Though Roman Stoicism adopted or simulated an attitude of systematic defiance to this system, we may note that in modern times Hegelianism is allied with recognition of Divine right and passive obedience; and to-day the quiescence of anything

approaching educated republicanism may be attributed to the prevalence of a similar outlook on the world.

Again, cxxxvii. : "The Stoic philosopher, proclaiming the moral autonomy of the individual, disclaimed the strictly political bond and sanction to found morality upon bases that were universal. The civic obligation in its narrower application was annulled, and superseded by the Cosmic; but the name and association of 'citizenship' were too deeply grafted into moral consciousness to be killed out. They survived into the idea of a 'world-citizenship.'"

And Rome especially was not disposed to regard the transcendent promises either of sage or Christian, except as violations of the compact which united the governors and the governed. The classical Roman spirit, averse to individualism, had long and stubbornly opposed the introduction of Philosophy and strange rites. It was almost an irony that drove the Republican senators of the early Imperial age to seek solace in those theories which their ancestors and models had relentlessly expelled. The pursuit of wisdom, in much accountable for the decay of population and the old vigorous urban life, now defied the political system which it had called forth. The Empire was the natural result of individualism and of disintegration: it could tolerate diversity, because it transcended and controlled it. It provided these aristocratic sages of the opposition with a conspicuous theatre for their noble, if ineffectual, defiance; and they forgot that its removal would leave them without occupation, in the midst of a surfeited democracy, who hated and despised them. It is impossible to refuse our admiration to the heroes and martyrs in the cause of the Republic; but the thinness of their ethical equipment, the negative character of their

maxims, must prevent us from regretting their failure. There is no happiness in the world without endeavour, without practical work. It was the merit of the Roman to be happy only in working, and he exchanged his spear for the plough after the annual campaign. Idleness settled down on Italy after the extinction of the yeoman class and free labour; and, in spite of Vergil and Columella, the recreations of the aristocratic Roman in the Imperial era ceased to be rural, as their chief business ceased to be military. An unhappy accident or want of straightforwardness in the new constitution prevented the nobles from accepting office under one who was but a member of their own order, a delegate of their own body; one who stood in an exalted position indeed, but well within the reach of envy,—a penalty from which the limited sovereign of modern times is exempt, from the very magnificence and uniqueness of his dignity. Jealousy excluded them from responsible and important posts; and an enforced leisure might vary with the voluptuous or austere, in the pursuit of strange pleasures of sense and ear, or in the defiant, yet negative, courage of a Stoical philosophy.

§ 6. The peculiar form which the Unity of the common search took in these philosophers was Fate. Quietistic as all Greek schools tended to become (banishing “practice” with the Buddhist as disease), none preached more assiduously the futility of human effort than the Stoics. An irresistible current of Destiny (which united all events and effects in an unbroken series); the universe as an unceasing process, always in motion, yet never progressing; the vanity of earthly pursuits, and a studied contempt of human ambition; the sense of Eternity, present here and now, final and

fixed, with no hope for a brighter dawn ; a resolute indifference to human history, except to point the moral of the emptiness of our wishes, and the final equality of all things and all men, good or bad, of all striving, as well as all inaction ; the conscience, or inner voice, as a single stable point in the flux of sense and matter, yet without practical value, seemingly an aimless penalty of a jealous (or a suffering ?) god, who gives as that cruel gift, a part of himself, the power to survey and to mourn the misery of life without the power to change ; practical duties of life, slipping one by one from the grasp of the sage, until his moral life can be summed up in a perpetual “non possumus” : such are the chief tenets of the later Stoicism, and such admirably suited the melancholy temper of Roman abstentionists. The earlier school (though possibly tinged with a latent Phœnician gloom) had been indistinguishable from Cynicism, save in the logical completeness of its system of defence, and in a metaphysical dogmatic, to which Antisthenes had wisely remained a stranger. No practical effort marked the earlier founders, whose sole business was to weld into a solid and coherent body, guarded by unassailable argument, a certain theory of the world. Only when domiciled in Rome did the School mix in actual life, and become not a sect, but a religion. The practical bent of the Roman mind transformed the Stoa from a mere house of dogmatic paradox into a temple of a devout, though despairing, Theism.

§ 7. Though negation—passivity—is the keynote of Stoical Ethics, yet this takes among the Romans a kind of positive character ; and their inertness is one of dormant energy. But this entirely depends upon the personal and individual bias of the various exponents ;



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shadow, Sansara, of existence, and colours with personal piety the Buddhistic atheism of the academic Stoics. Plutarch, who has much in common with this School, is yet, in ultimate metaphysics, a Dualist, and in practical life an admirer and (so far as the times allowed) an emulator of the simple and cheerful virtue of the ancients. ~~Marcus Aurelius, the last of the Stoics, is, at the same time, the first of the Neo-Platonists, and in his doctrine of the "deity within" transforms a mere physical connexion of the soul and the upper air into a mystical creed that was the very bulwark and support of the brighter side, the "southern front," of his *Meditations*.~~ Clement of Alexandria (if by the inclusion of this name I may complete the list) adapts the Stoic precision of formula and definition to the growing science of Christian Ethics, which, issuing from the pure passivity of the Millenarian or the patient sufferer for truth's sake, was destined, with its new interest in social life, to re-create society in Europe. To resume: the victims of the Imperial régime gladly welcomed a somewhat frigid school as having an implicit power of sustenance and consolation in critical times. Yet within this loose network they borrowed from many sources; they laid no claim to completeness or consistency. For the mainspring of their studies was not intellectual curiosity, or the desire of applause, or the tranquil discovery and enjoyment of eternal verities. In the decay or syncretism of various popular cults, in the congregation of the most varied nationalities under a single sway, in the blurring of all distinct outline, once separating the petty gods from the great and single Source of Life, in the gradual closing to the nobles of the arena of practical ambition under a

socialist monarchy which dispensed with their services, we may see the chief causes of this passionate devotion to Stoicism, and this gradual transformation of a commonplace scheme of materialism into one of the noblest, if the most melancholy, of all religions. Where all separateness of feature, all idiosyncrasy, had faded into a world-empire, where all individual effort or significance tended to disappear in a universal law, the sage meditating profoundly on the unity of Being and the nexus of events, the eternity of type and the triviality of the fleeting particular, could only find consolation in Mysticism, none the less real because it was not explicit.

§ 9. Stoicism preaches, as we have seen, the ethics of abstention. Centring all attention on the inner life of the individual, like all the subjective schools of the post-Aristotelian age, it speedily despaired of finding a true sphere for his activity, and gradually withdrew its claims to occupy or to direct any portion of human life. The universal order and unity (so strangely contrasted with Epicurean pluralism) could be approached only by “unselfishness”; that devotion to a purely *typical* (not a *personal*) excellence which characterizes all Greek thought in the field of morals. The single free and perpetually repellent point of consciousness, the *will* (to which alone any value could be attached), was to be occupied in a meaningless conflict with natural emotion, and in lofty disdain of the outer world of nature or society. While the theoretical creed of the Stoic or the Cynic proudly pronounced its text to be a reasonable following of Nature, an insistence on the unity, harmony, and order in the world, and a belief in a common human brotherhood predominating above petty national or class

distinctions, the School not only ended in setting the sage in isolation from a world of fate or chance, and from his fellows, but tortured him with a sense of dualism and unceasing conflict within the limits of his own nature. It was impossible to regard the world as a field for moral discipline and trial (for the conception of Stoic immortality compels us to pronounce its asceticism either impious or superfluous), nor, again, as a scene of perpetual advance for the human race towards a distant goal; which belief, cold comfort though it be, may indeed sustain pilgrims in their own unsteady and failing footsteps. Neither was it a vain show, the uneasy dreams of some sleeping God: a theory which may amuse a pessimist speculator, and reconcile him to the indifference of sensations (or, indeed, of hopes), which, after all, are not really his.

§ 10. It is difficult to say what the Stoic universe meant for the wise man. Its motive, its author, its goal were alike undiscoverable; and the kindly thoughts, the noble sentiment of duty, the compassionate unselfishness of so many of the School, were held as a legacy of some primitive religious teaching, some illogical remnant of personal temperament, in spite of the negative dogma of their philosophic creed. Personal distinction, earnestness of aim, and devotion to a set purpose, have consecrated the names of Seneca, Epictetus, and Aurelius. But this influence depends, not on their close adherence to a logical system, but in the original sincerity of their sentiments, in their pure and genuine characters. Under them, the School loses all its distinctive features, its moral harshness, its dogmatism. A gentle melancholy of doubt, and a delicate and refined consideration for others, take the place of the certainty and the austerity

of the elders. The Roman character, tempered by that admixture with Spanish influences which marks the first century, both in politics and in letters, becomes mystical and feminine. Only from the older school is maintained that barren article of faith which is the doom of human effort or enterprise in Stoic, in Mahometan, in Brahmin—the divine Unity. Utterly unable to “qualify” or describe this original and comprehensive Being, rejecting the earlier physical interpretation, and straining on the path of negative theology towards a purely spiritual conception, they did, indeed, succeed in establishing a verbal kinship between the soul and its maker, one gleam of consolation in an alien world; but in so doing, they abandoned the chief tenet of their nominal system, and prepared the way for that final leap into sentiment and emotion in which Greek philosophy was destined to perish. A like fate probably awaits all Schools which start from an assumption of original Unity. Stoicism is but one of many which end in a complete reversal of their most fundamental axioms. Monism has passed into the harshest Dualism; Pantheism into an impossible transcendence; sternness, certainty, and effort into doubt, compassion, and resignation. If Aurelius demands our sympathy and our praise in his unselfish efforts for the security of the Empire, it is because his practice is better than his creed; because he has supplanted the fate of positivism by a distant Providence, to whom he stretches out pure hands, full of mute but unavailing appeal. But he is the last of Roman Stoics; he ~~founds no School.~~ Rational thought is swept away by a torrent of Oriental mysticism or ceremonial; and even while we read his private memoirs the empty garments of a formal Stoicism fall away to disclose a

soul glowing with an emotion midway between compassion and love, and stirred to an activity (which his creed belied), if not by enthusiasm, at least by a strong sense of loyalty and duty. Our task will lead us to examine in detail the points in which the Emperor deserts the philosophy of the Schools for the trüer instincts of his own heart; but first it will be wise to inquire into the contributions of his fore-runners, and thus estimate his debt to Seneca and to Epictetus.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY IN ROME

ANALYSIS

- § 1. Roman "Stoicism" as a familiar phase of human thought; faith-philosophy (in ethics) superinduced on naturalism and without attempt at consistency.
- § 2. The Empire not the cause, but one among many symptoms, of a widespread Quietism.
- § 3. Rome's contribution to Individualism; as Nominalist, encourages the concrete and personal, in default of Hellenic appreciation of abstractions.
- § 4. Seneca defines "Summum Bonum" as a "Soul"; and attaches weight to "præcepta" rather than to "decreta."
- § 5. Decay of scientific dogmatism, and distaste for physical philology; Seneca seeks a moral Deity; and is unable to reconcile natural order and the moral law, or combine in a single Supreme principle.
- § 6. His Dualism and Asceticism; he repudiates utilitarian motive in Science, and dissuades from public life.
- § 7. The leisure of the true Sage occupied with friendship or introspection.
- § 8. The "chief good" as Tranquillity of Mind; Egoism of all Greek philosophy.
- § 9. Absolute Inwardness of the chief good; as an attitude of mind which places happiness entirely in our own power, and neither finds nor demands correspondence in the outer world.

§ 1. It is perhaps a little unfortunate that we talk of "Stoicism" as the predominant philosophy at Rome among those whose energies, debarred from political action, had passed into the fresh channel of speculation

on human conduct, independent of the civic sanction. If it is Stoicism at all, the tenets are very different from what we can deem certain in the older School. To call it Eclecticism again, or worse still Syncretism, is to give a difficult name to a very familiar phase of the human mind ; and perhaps to stifle the interest of an ordinary reader, who will fancy he has to deal with profound truth or logical subtleties, rather than with a moral attitude which is very likely nearly akin to his own. The Roman character had indeed much in common with the practical sobriety of the English. It held fast, in the decay of local worships, to the original and honourable sentiments which social instinct had implanted, and tradition had ennobled and illustrated by heroic example,—duty to self, to parents, to friends, and to country. They were either unable or unwilling to analyze the ultimate motives of conduct. The thought of tearing up the roots of moral behaviour and examining critically the springs of action was abhorrent to them. As Professor Huxley makes no pretence at accommodating his human practice to the laws of the universe, as he completely separates¹ the human function with its postulate of Freedom from the self-centred and predestined automatism of the rest of Creation ; so the Roman “ through evil report and good report ” preserved his sense of human dignity, and respected the claims which an exacting State or a capricious Fortune might make on his loyalty, forbearance, or self-sacrifice. He could not explain or justify ; but he was convinced that somehow it was his duty to act after the old time-honoured fashion. Divine sanctions might be

¹ As completely as Maurice Maeterlinck in his *Kingdom of Matter*, or as Andrew Seth in *Man's Place in the Cosmos*.



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recognized this, and felt that the high Idealism, supporting a republican form of government, had passed away for ever, and that the temper of the times demanded a personal and embodied Sovereign, dispenser of the material benefits of justice, peace, and plenty.¹

Over the Roman world had spread this sombre veil of Quietism. This spirit had handed over to the conquerors as yet vigorous the independence of a wearied and diffident society, and had at last sought its newest recruits among the conquerors themselves. Speculation was a higher life than action ; indeed, was the highest kind of activity for those who claimed to be free.

§ 3. To this attitude of reserve and resignation, the Roman brought certain qualities of his own. It is the fashion to-day² to attribute to the Germano-Christian influence that emphasis on the liberty of the individual and his immortal destiny, which formed the secret impulse of the Mediæval Empire, in its ideals, constitution, and development, which resulted, breaking up the Realistic fabric inherited from Classical times, in the Reformation, and the movements of Emancipation within living memory. But it will not be fair to forget the precious contribution of Rome. Greece, while it revelled in the wild and unaccountable caprice of some spoilt favourite of fortune, never rose to a full definition of the Personal. The brief emphasis on the relativity of knowledge in the Sophistic age, only reacted into a deification of the Absolute ; and the so-called Subjective Schools failed, as we have already seen, to justify or to explain individual consciousness. They could only

¹ See the undoubtedly sincere language of Seneca as to the Imperial responsibilities and significance, *De Clem.* i. §§ 1, 3, 4, 5.

² See Gierke's *Political Ideals in the Middle Ages*.

point to a shadowy type of ideal man, before which all special or peculiar or relative qualities in each must be sacrificed as excrescences. The Roman, as practical man of affairs even in retirement, knew nothing of these abstractions. He refuses (with Horace) to bow the knee to any master. He subordinates all to practice, he disparages logical symmetry, and believes all time wasted which is spent in those dialectic subtleties, so dear to the Porch, in its early Megarian and Eristic days. Cicero and Seneca mingle impartially, and without attempt at uniformity, the teaching of the Schools and the maxims of many rivals. Even that Ideal Virtue or *Summum Bonum*, which (in default of discovering the Sage) must ever remain beyond human attainment, should be sought rather in the concrete, imitable form, which its nearest imitators have set before us, all the more useful because they are imperfect. Instead of reverence for Zeno and Chrysippus, masters of formula, we have respect for good men, for Socrates, Cato, and Brutus. The pages of Seneca are pleasantly diversified by anecdotes of honest citizens, whose approximations to Virtue are far more edifying than any solitary musing on ideal perfection. Thrice does Seneca startle us by calling the Chief Good a Soul! No distant sea of impersonal goodness, no realm of pure ideas, no unfaltering moral Law, above and irrespective of all particulars; but an individual, who had embodied and attained in some measure that human excellence of which all men were speaking,¹ and

¹ Both ἀρετή and "virtus" are entirely mistranslated by "virtue." *Virtue* suggests, I think, an external standard which demands our obedience without question or compromise; while the other names imply a far closer and implicit connexion between the ideal and per-

could offer in the concrete circumstances of life illustrations of its method and value.

§ 4. In the 113th letter to Lucilius we find: "*Justitia quid est? Animus quodammodo se habens.*" In Letter 117, § 12, Sapiencia is defined as *Mens perfecta vel ad summum optimumque perducta*. So, too, in the "Blessed Life," § 4, "*Summum Bonum est Animus fortuita despiciens*"—and in Letter 120, § 8, when he is inquiring how the first rudimentary knowledge of right and wrong came to us, he believes the example of ancient merit and heroism stirred us to realize, by an admiration at first impulsive and involuntary (Fabricius and Horatius Cocles, "*hæc et hujusmodi facta imaginem nobis ostendere Virtutis*"). In precisely the same spirit, he is averse to empty generalizations, to laws of conduct so universal that they cover everything and counsel nothing. He recognizes greatest profit, not in these formal "decreta," but in the "præcepta" of the casuist or the Director. The difficulty in Ethics (whether as a science or for individual guidance) is never the discovery of general principles, but their application. All Seneca's writings are occasional, and are prompted by the distress or spiritual needs of his friends. The mere idle repetition of Stoic commonplace, "The good man alone is happy," "Virtue is the sonal interest. This was due to the vague teleology which dominated Greek thought and its derivatives after Socrates. Harmony of inward and outward was εὐδαιμονία, συμφώνως, ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν τῇ φύσει (with its ambiguous meaning). Ἀρετή was the means to this end desired by all; and was attained by the development of the οἰκεῖον ἔργον, which in man (as opposed to Stag or Tiger) was a "reasoned and consistent life." It is quite impossible to say where unselfish admiration for a lofty ideal of behaviour, and where the lower motive, urging us to tranquillity and peace in the only certain region of our consciousness, have their precise limits.

sole end of Life," did not interest him. Everyone agreed about the fundamental principles; but few could apply the minor premise. The austere Quintilian rebukes him for superficiality in his treatment; but a really sincere casuistry must needs be opportunist and disconnected, sometimes incoherent and even inconsistent. Philosophy was in want of a new Socrates to bring down formula again into life. We are certainly disinclined to-day to quarrel with him for exchanging a barren and formal symmetry for moral earnestness; just that personal, almost missionary, interest which enables French writers¹ to compare him with the Catholic directors and father-confessors of the seventeenth century.

§ 5. The fabric of Certitude—the great dogmatic Cosmology of early Stoicism—had crumbled into dust. Nothing was left of it except a sense of immensity, against which the Hellenic mind had from the outset striven nobly but in vain; and a conception of a Unity beyond all human appreciation. In all ultimate problems, Seneca was an Agnostic, with a firm hold on the dignity of the moral life, none the less firm because it was inconsistent. With all his Stoic protest that Knowledge, like Life, was one, an impassable gulf yawns between his theory and his practice. The earlier school has been materialist and positive; its theology was a department of its physics; its ethics merely "sounded the recall" from a corrupt and wearied society of civilized beings to a norm of nature and simplicity which no one cared to define precisely. But the first century had passed beyond the naïve positivism which superimposed on universal automatism a doctrine of

¹ M. Constant Martha among others.

man's freedom and responsibility, and narrowed the term "natural" to the passive resignation of an ascetic. The demand of the three Roman Stoics is for a moral Author of the Universe. Their failure to discover any satisfactory clue to the Divine dealings produced that deepening sense of vanity and distress. It is in this consciousness of failure that Aurelius seeks *within* the solace he cannot find *without*, and becomes the first of the introspective Platonists. To Seneca all dogma is fluid, except the belief in the final destruction of the world. Though he yearns, with Fichte, to see God in "the moral order of the Universe," he is forced in the interests of Unity to identify Him with every other known force. As He is everything, so any name will suit Him. He is the sum of existence; or the secret and abstract law which guides it; He is Nature or Fate. The partial names of special deities are all His, and together they make up the fulness of the Divine title; but they disappear in the immense nothingness, rather than colour or qualify it. The special sense of nearness to man, of a sympathy something more than physical, of an approval and favour more clearly displayed than in a brilliant heaven and unerring laws, this is wanting. All Theology must be anthropomorphic or it ceases to be more than Natural Law. A barrier (which we believe can never be transcended) separates man as a moral agent (or more clearly, as a consciousness burdened with a sense of moral responsibility, which cannot be shaken off) from the rest of the Universe. Any attempt at a Supreme Synthesis, from the side of either material or spiritual Law, is destined to failure. The world is twofold; and it is as foolish to forget the real in the Ideal, as it is to merge the

special consciousness of man in the processes of a causal series. Because Seneca cannot see the finger of God in the world outside, and because he is determined to find Him somewhere, he brings into prominence a certain dogma of the earlier school, the divinity of the soul as a ray sent down from heaven; and gives this purely physical belief a new and a moral significance. Upon this semi-naturalistic, semi-mystical tenet, Epictetus, a truer follower of Socrates, builds his magnificent appeal to the children of a common Father. Early Stoicism doubted if Providence condescended to particulars: the School ended in Aurelius with denying that God had any other home except the purified spirit of the individual.

§.6. And the vast Universe which was thus left riderless. To whose dominion was it entrusted? To a blind or malevolent spirit of caprice, with whom the Sage could have no compromise. Nature to our modern Stoic meant emphatically the wise man's inner nature; his reasonable soul, as defined by Aristotle. The course of the world might be termed Providential, in a vague and general sense; but the parts, the special events, were abandoned to the Usurper Fortune, just as in the Stoical Christian Lactantius, the Devil and no one else is the ruler of earth and the dispenser of every earthly blessing. As ζῶον λογικόν man might admire the orbits of the stars, and find some delight in the study of natural problems. But the more particular enjoyment of her gifts was strictly interdicted. "Touch not, taste not, handle not" was written on the vestibule of the Stoic temple. All contact beyond pure necessities was disallowed; as a scene of gaiety the world was forbidden ground; the "regnum hominis" over

the inanimate was a sacrilegious profanation. The Stoic (always in theory and generally in practice also) gave up the present and the visible to the evil spirit, quite as decisively as the most pessimistic and introspective anchorite among the Christians. The doctrine of the sympathy of all things (*συμπάθεια, συνάφεια*) ended in a most rigorous contrast of man and nature. As Macaulay rightly objected, it was "only to be looked at"; any utilitarian motive in scientific knowledge is impiety in the eyes of Seneca or of his pupil Lucilius. And again as ζῶον πολιτικόν man was in theory summoned to take part in a smaller world of Society. But the debates of the earlier Stoics exhibit a ludicrous hesitation to enter public life. Many were the excuses made, strange the pretexts accepted for the evasion of this obvious and classical duty. Either the actual State was too corrupt, or there were peculiar if temporary obstacles, which hindered this especial Sage, and condemned him to a leisure which he accepted with pretended reluctance. Seneca is at least acute enough to see that these protests were insincere, and that it was the fixed if unacknowledged resolve of the Stoic Masters to abstain from politics. "The result," he tells us, "is the same in either school; whether the Epicurean refuse an active life unless the circumstances are exceptional, or the Stoic condemn seclusion unless the State is too lawless, none of them ever do issue forth," and he notes their invariable counsel to their followers to enter public life, and at the same time their invariable abstention.

§ 7. Debarred from the life of the voluptuary or the ambitious, and welcomed to the somewhat frigid comfort of scientific studies, strictly without ulterior motive,



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§ 8. This as the guiding principle of actual life is as old as Democritus. As soon as inquiry into the wider world of Nature had dissolved the old religious allegiance to family and country, the sole aim of the personal life was repose and self-sufficiency. The brief and classical Athenian School alone (and that very imperfectly) continued to recognize an objective. It attempted to revive the old sanctions of patriotism and piety, and give them a new meaning and universality. But the emphasis on Duty among the post-Aristotelians, and their large and comprehensive "Providential Cosmology," cannot blind one to the egoistic aim of their speculation and practice. There is, I admit, the perennial question, never settled to the last, as to the true interpretation of Nature. "Which? 'my own,' or that of the Universe?" To-day we are inclined to place at opposite poles the heroism of sacrifice to the common good, the piety of resignation to the divine, and any scheme of self-realization.¹

We connect the Stoics with the former; but it must be remembered that the *motive* for their philosophy was above all utilitarian and eudæmonistic; the attainment of contentment and calm by a critical inquiry into the exact limits of man's powers and freedom,—a comparison (if you like) of the *universal* and the *special* Nature, but, above all, from the point of view of the latter. (It is a mistaken and unfruitful labour to decide whether "virtue" must be followed because it is God's will, irrespective of any consequences to us; or because plain common sense and experience of other men's folly assures us that lasting peace of mind is only reached

¹ For a similar result in a modern mind, cf. Kirkengard the Dane, quoted by M. A. Stobart, *Fortnightly Review*, 1902, January (see p. 49).

on this path. What system has ever clearly explained the motive of unselfishness? ¹ There lies at the root of our nature an impulse to do good in which the overmastering joy of the emotion is strangely mixed with calmer recognition of "duty to one's neighbour"; and it would be impossible to determine whether mystical resignation springs entirely from love to God, or entirely from a sense of the vainness of resistance.²)

§ 9. However this may be, to Seneca "virtue" and happiness were identical; objective and subjective; not a mere empty postulate of correspondence, but a real "tasted" and tested unity.³ He is quite convinced of the folly of the lower lives. He sees in their votaries creatures of impulse,⁴ swayed by unworthy passion or ambition, slaves of their surroundings (for the rich are "possessed," and are not real possessors), who have laboured gratuitously to make comfort in life unattainable, because they strive only to increase, instead of diminish, the multitude of things they cannot do without. Here is the "casus belli" between Seneca and Bacon as portrayed in Macaulay's famous essay. Seneca had seen through the illusion of a complex civilisation. He lived in the midst of such; nay, he himself enjoyed a command over the material, the refined, the artistic, which very few of us can claim

¹ *Vit. Beat.* 9: "Sed tu quoque" inquit, "virtutem non ob aliud colis quam quia aliquam ex illa speras voluptatem." This is, of course, contested; but it becomes a mere question of words.

² *Benef.* iv. 2.

³ e.g. *Vit. Beat.* 3: "Nam pro voluptatibus et pro illis quæ parva et fragilia sunt et in ipsis flagitiis noxia, ingens Gaudium subit inconcussum et æquabile: tum pax et concordia animi et magnitudo cum mansuetudine."

⁴ The "Marionettes" of Aurelius (*νευροσπαστοί*).

to-day, and which was outside the wildest speculation of the apostle of the "Regnum hominis." The ordinary Roman city-slave was probably more fastidious and exacting than an Englishman of the middle class to-day; and we know how little the terrors of cross and whip tempered the gaiety or controlled the mischievous intrigues of these happy and irresponsible children. But satiety and disgust is the note of polished Rome in the early imperial age; of which an exquisite sensuality was rather the effect than the cause. It seemed to Seneca consummate folly to give hostages to fortune, or to found one's spiritual happiness on an unsubstantial fabric of external wealth, or the favour of a monarch, or a people's praise.¹ Not for the most exalted indifference, but in pure common sense, had the early Stoics repudiated the Aristotelian and Peripatetic alliance, or compromise with the "outer goods." Surely the content of a soul at peace with itself must depend on nothing which fortune could injure or take away.² Happiness must be something altogether *ἴδιον, ἀναφαιρετόν*; something private, eternal, inexhaustible, unassailable; and in the face of the extravagant claims of science to-day, we may complain that (even in the Churches) this wholesome caution of the Stoics is forgotten. Resignation, unselfishness, is

¹ Civilization and its increased wants and complexity of living passed under the censure of both schools. Stobæus, *Floril.* xvii. : Ἐπικουῖρος ἐρωτηθεὶς πῶς ἀν.τις πλουτήσειεν ; Οὐ τοῖς οὐσι προστιθεὶς ἔφη τῆς δὲ χρείας τὰ πολλὰ περιτέμνων.

² Ep. 66 : "Omnia enim ista, in quæ dominium Casus exercet, serva sunt; pecunia et corpus et honores: imbecilla, fluida, mortalia, possessionis incestæ. Illa rursus libera et invicta opera virtutis; quæ non ideo magis appetenda sunt si benignius a Fortuna tractantur; nec minus si aliquâ rerum iniquitate premuntur."

certainly not the centre, nor the motive, of their system.

Fortn., Jan. 1902.—M. A. Stobart,—“It is perhaps by the expression, desire to enjoy life, that the *Æsthetic* goal can most fitly be epitomized. And here lies the difference of the two forms of living, the *æsthetic* and the *moral*.

“For the conditions attending the necessity to enjoy life exist (says the Danish apostle) either outside the individual, or, if contained within himself—as in shape of health, sport, or pleasure entering in any of a thousand forms—are of such a nature as to be beyond his own control; they are conditions, in other words, they are relative to circumstances of time, country, surroundings, and the inherited place in the world of the individual, whose spontaneity of action is controlled by a relationship to Destiny, which is beyond his own limit of responsibility.

“Whereas in the Ethical, the conditions of life are contained within and not outside the individual; for the true Ethical sphere is reached (says K.) alone by inwardness; by subjective conquest of the will, by the evolution of a power of will which, making in the direction of a consciousness of the value of the soul, as a portion of the Eternal Entity, gives a continuity, a teleological value to every action, lacking in the *Æsthetic* Life of Relativity, which is of the moment, and as such is subject to fluctuating alternatives of joy and despair.

“There comes (says K.) to everyone a time when he outgrows the spontaneous qualities of his child's nature, when he becomes dissatisfied with a haphazard relationship to Time and to Existence, and wishes to assure himself of a definite place in the scheme of the universe;—when he realizes, with the Preacher of old, the vanity, the transitoriness, of that upon which he had set his mind; and when, unconsciously it may be, he longs to grasp himself as Soul, as an Eternal Entity, rather than as a fleeting Ego, and—despair is the result.

“Despair is the culmination of the æsthetic life, which is itself despair, transitoriness being of its essence, and the moment of Despair may be the moment of the choice. It is on the importance of this choice that K. lays stress. Not that it is absolute as between good and evil. The *Æsthetic* life is not evil, it is indifferent. The importance lies in the fact that what is chosen is the Self, not as a limited relative Ego in a circumscribed existence, but the Self as a portion of Eternity, of the great and everlasting power. This choice constitutes in itself a treasure within each man that makes him greater than the angels. Nothing, he says, in life can equal the solemnity, the significance of the moment, when the Individual becomes conscious of and chooses his Self as a portion of the Eternal Whole. At such a moment, when all Nature around is hushed, serene as a starry night, and the soul is alone in all the world, then will the heavens seem to divide, and there will be made visible the Everlasting Power. Then will the Ego become for the first time conscious of, and being conscious of, will choose or rather accept his Self. Then has the Soul seen the Highest, what no mortal eye can ever see, and what can never be forgotten,—the Soul has received that knight-hood which ennobles it for all Eternity. He becomes, not another personality; but he becomes Himself; consciousness unites its fragments, and he is for the first time Himself.

“This ethical (it is apparent in Kir.’s view) is but the rainbow-bridge to the last of the three great spheres, *Æsthetic*, *Ethical*, and *Religious*, to which throughout his writings he introduces us. The bias of his own mind was never towards the purely human moral, which, according to his teaching in ‘*Either, Or*,’ required an open dealing with the world incompatible with his own mystical and recondite nature; but towards pietistic and exacting religion.”

CHAPTER IV

"THE WISE MAN"

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *Ideal of Quietism; The "Summum Bonum" as the Wise Man in Retirement.*
- § 2. *Man as spectator, not as agent; an ascetic ideal which recurs perpetually in history.*
- § 3. *Stoic maxim "Follow Nature" the exact converse to modern Naturalism; man's peculiar nature as his power to criticise, without enjoying.*
- § 4. *"The Golden Age," "The Fall"; Seneca more optimistic than Aurelius.*
- § 5. *External Nature = God; and natural studies unfold the essence of the Deity (physical Pantheism).*
- § 6. *At the same time, needs of man's moral nature demand as complementary doctrine, Spiritual pantheism; God contrasted with the world, as man's Soul with his body. Failure of all synthetic and monistic systems.*
- § 7. *Seneca's depreciation of History, as the realm of the contingent and perishing, by the side of Natural Law, or the contemplation of the Eternal and unchanging.*
- § 8. *His Psychology entirely Platonic and dualist; a still more complete separation of the two spheres in Gnostics; Christian Church struggles against the Dualism and Abstention of classical antiquity.*
- § 9. *Summary of the various sides of philosophic thought which meet in the System of Seneca.*

§ 1. LET us now look at two or three passages in which Seneca depicts this ideal of quietism and self-sufficing calm.

Ep. 45 : “ Si vis utique verborum ambiguitates diducere, hoc nos doce beatum non eum esse quem vulgus appellat, ad quem pecunia magna confluxit : Sed illum cui bonum omne in animo est, erectum et excelsum et mirabilia calcantem ; qui neminem videt cum quo se commutatum velit ; qui hominem eâ solâ parte æstimat, quâ homo est ; qui Naturâ magistrâ utitur, ad illius leges componitur, sic vivit quomodo Illa præscripsit ; cui bona sua nulla vis excutit ; qui mala in bonum vertit ; certus iudicii, inconcussus, intrepidus ; quem aliqua vis movet, nulla perturbat ; quem Fortuna, quum quod habuit telum nocentissimum, vi maximâ intorsit, pungit non vulnerat,—et hoc raro.”

Ep. 66 : “ Ad primum revertamur et consideremus id quale sit. Animus intuens vera, peritus fugiendorum ac petendorum, non ex opinione sed ex Naturâ pretia rebus imponens, toti se inserens mundo et in omnes ejus actus contemplationem suam mittens, cogitationibus actionibus intentus, ex æquo magnus ac vehemens, asperis blandisque pariter invictus, neutri se Fortunæ submittens, supra omnia quæ contingunt acciduntque eminens, pulcherrimus ornatissimus cum decore, cum viribus sanus ac siccus, imperturbatus intrepidus, quem nulla vis frangat, quem nec attollant fortuita nec deprimant. Talis Animus Virtus est.”

Vit. Beat. 4 : “ Quid enim prohibet nos beatam vitam dicere, liberum Animum et erectum, et interritum ac stabilem, extra metum extra cupiditatem positum ? cui unum bonum honestas, unum malum turpitude ? Cætera vilis turba rerum, nec detrahens quicquam beatæ vitæ, nec adjiciens, sine auctu ac detrimento Summi Boni veniens ac recedens. Hunc ita fundatum necesse est (velit nolit) sequatur hilaritas continua et lætitia alta atq. ex alto veniens, ut quæ suis gaudeat nec majora domesticis cupiat . . . 5. Ergo exeundum ad Libertatem est : hanc non alia res tribuit quam Fortunæ negligentia. Tum illud orietur inæstimabile bonum, quies mentis in tuto collocatæ et sublimitas.”



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clear from ancient history that the critical attitude becomes a favourite, when the concrete particular of life is distrusted or despised; when the generalizations of the student are alone supposed to contain the truth. We have seen how the outer world, though nominally subject to providential ruling, was yet really in the hands of an incalculable caprice. This amounted to a denial of Providence; and the periodical contests between Stoic and Epicurean, of which Lucian gives us an instance a century later, were purely verbal and academic. Quintilian, in numberless passages, shows us how intimately connected was the thought of Providence with interest in public duty. If only the unchanging and permanent is real, if the personal and the particular are illusion or a debased copy of the unseen, interest in the world's transformation gives place to the purely scientific respect, which we note in Seneca's correspondent, Lucilius. Christianity lays a similar Platonic emphasis on the "world of true Being," but has never forgotten, in the clouds of formula or dogmatic dialectic, that the world exists for the trial and discipline of souls,—an assumption which it is easy to ridicule as "anthropocentric," and on which reposes the whole complex of Western Ethics and European Society.

§ 3. This rigid consistency and undeviating tenor of life, by which a man becomes "his own," free, and happy, is to be maintained by following nature,—in the double sense, accepting his allotted destiny without murmur, and exercising the distinctively human faculty in himself. He must abandon, if he seeks perfection, every claim upon the fragile and insecure environment, the "non-ego," which hems in his inward life; and again, every quality or equipment which he has in

common with lower animals. We often connect schemes of Naturalism with a whole-hearted devotion to Nature. Rousseau and Thoreau, to name two instances, would lead one back to the simplest pleasures of unreflective acquiescence and to impulsive emotion. But the philosophic mind of antiquity was far more austere. Reacting against a selfish or corrupt civilization, it seems to recall men to a golden age of harmony with Nature. The result was widely different. It set up an altar to Reason in the abstract, the faculty which criticizes and does not enjoy; while by its own experience it was sadly convinced that the particular manifestation of this Eternal Intelligence, in Socrates or Zeno, was imperfect and infirm. Hence its systematic trend towards Mysticism, towards a surrender of the visible world, a depreciation of the value of the present, incompatible with any true sympathy with Nature. In spite of his own weakness to attain truth, the sage could not, even in the Epicurean School, throw off the critical and analytic spirit and become a child of Nature. Those who think that the Hellenic temper minimizes the gulf between man and the natural world, are most assuredly blind. It was this immediate query, “What is *my* nature in relation to the *Universal*?” which convinced them of the essential opposition. If man had any true affinity, it was with the stars and their automatic precision and unreflecting perfection, not with the God-forsaken region of the sublunary. Because man could criticize as well as enjoy, a combination implied in conscious happiness, could analyse as well as act,—and because the lower animals who were ζῶα ἄλογα could only act and enjoy,—it seemed clear that man’s special function lay in the other

direction. A modern Naturalism might find in the encouragement of the "ape and tiger" the true end of man; a resolute egoism which saw our duty in the continuance in the human arena of that struggle for life, that boundless competition, which marks the lower sphere. Certainly no disciple of the School could place the special virtue of man in the feminine passivity of forbearance, abstention, mildness, and indifference; or in a contemplative study which set a veto on more familiar intercourse. It seems clear that to the Greeks and Romans, Nature never lost her old terrible character, which she bears still to the superstitious savage; haunted in every tree or grotto or river by jealous and unaccountable powers; unstable, insecure, a Siren who lavishes her allurements only to slay. The almost universal transference of force from grotesque or malignant spirits to impartial mechanism failed to relieve man of this sense of foreignness and alienation. Lucretius, like many another apostle of religious or social freedom, exults in vain over an empty victory, and thinks the discovery of law, or, at least, of uniformity, implies the attainment of liberty. Epicurus, his master, saw more truly into the heart of man; and knew that mechanical law, though more satisfying to the sage, because he seems to control by understanding it, is yet to the sage as *man*, more intolerable than the propitiable caprice of the expelled Dæmons. Be this as it may, it is certain that the Classical nations never entered, in spite of several efforts, into that blissful harmony with Nature which should have saved them this recurring problem: What is my peculiar nature, duty, or happiness in relation to the whole?

§ 4. The sense of the "Fall," of the relapse from an

early and primitive age of Gold, of the gradual decay of men, of States, of this fertile earth itself, is visible in all ancient authors. The writers of the Augustan age with one consent sing the praises of this lost felicity; and advise all who can to revert to a simplicity which they could not attain themselves. Seneca thinks it is possible to return to this “State before the Fall.” He, far more optimistic than Aurelius, believes in man’s innate goodness and his power to obtain happiness by limiting his wants and trusting Nature. He even attacks the doctrine of “Original Sin” so dear to Augustan (as well as Augustinian) speculators:

Ep. xciv. (55): “Erras enim si existimas nobiscum vitia nasci. Supervenerunt, ingesta sunt. Nulli nos vitio Natura conciliat: illa integros ac liberos genuit.”—*Cons. ad Helv.* 5: “Bona conditione geniti sumus si eam non deseruerimus; id egit Rer. Natura ut ad bene vivendum non magno apparatu opus esset.”—*Brev. Vit.* 2: “Quid de Rer. Natura querimur? Illa se benigne gessit: vita si scias uti longa est.”

Ep. lxxviii.: “Sic nos amantissima nostri Natura disposuit, ut dolorem aut tolerabilem aut brevem faceret.”—Ep. xc.: “Non fuit tam inimica Natura, ut . . . homo solus non posset sine tot artibus vivere . . . ad parata nati sumus . . . a Natura luxuria descivit.”—Ep. cviii.: “Omnibus enim Natura fundamenta dedit, semenque virtutum: omnes ad omnia ista nati sumus.”

Ep. cxviii.: “Unde aliquid cognoscitur bonum? Si perfecte secundum Naturam est . . . hæc ejus proprietas est.”—Ep. cxxii.: “Omnia vitia contra Naturam pugnant (aversandi diem et totam vitam in noctem transferendi).”

Ep. i.: “Virtus secundum Naturam est; vitia inimica et infesta sunt.”

Ep. lxvi.: “Bonum sine ratione nullum est; sequitur autem ratio Naturam. Quid est ergo ratio? Naturæ imitatio. Quid

est summum hominis bonum? ex Naturæ voluntate se gerere.
 . . . Bonorum unum propositum est consentire Naturæ.”

§ 5. But we cannot help noticing that the term Nature is unstable and precarious. He is not using it in the ordinary and current sense. Just as it is impossible in Lucan to decide on the limits or essential difference of Fate and Fortune, which are probably identical, so Seneca uses Nature and God interchangeably. But we have already seen how the moralizing of the Divine idea in the Roman Stoics had shaken the hold of the Divine Being on the actual world, “Semper paret, semel jussit.” He does not control the physical universe, or the lot of individuals. He is like a parent in the folk-lore tales sending out his children into a world, scantily equipped with a few maxims of prudence and a father’s blessing. “Insita sunt nobis omnium ætatum omniumque artium semina, magisterque ex occulto *Deus* producit ingenia” (*Benef.* iv. 6). His collocator rejoins that it is Nature and not God (as a special providence), “Natura hæc mihi præstat.” Seneca will not hear of the antithesis: “Nonne intelligis, te cum hoc dicis, mutare nomen Deo?” “Quid enim est aliud Natura quam Deus et Divina Ratio toti mundo partibusque ejus inserta.”—§ 8. “Ergo nihil agis, ingrattissime mortalium, qui te negas Deo debere, sed Naturæ.” “Quia nec Natura sine Deo est, nec Deus sine Naturâ, sed idem est utrumque nec distat officio.” (See also N. Q. ii. 45; l. i. prolog.: “Quid est Deus? mens universi. Quid est Deus? quod vides totum et quod non vides totum”; with which we may compare Lucan’s famous line: “Jupiter est quodcunque vides, quodcunque moveris.”) Now here, as in most parts of

the Stoical physical ethics (an absurd attempt to unite the irreconcilable), we see two conflicting tendencies. Again and again does Seneca hymn the delights of Science; for it is an inquiry into God; it is the truest occupation of the Sage's leisure; not the mere *ἀμεταμελητὸς ἡδονή* of Plato, but a real insight into God's secrets and inmost essence. So much for the contemplative side. Speculatively, the universe is one and the individual a part; God is Nature.

§ 6. But the moment the *practical* or moral side is approached, this postulated harmony at once disappears. The Deity is implicitly in strongest contrast to the work of his hands, just as man, as spirit, as intelligence, is to his body. Universe and body are for practice, dismissed with epithets as contemptuous, as ascetic, as are ever found in the frankly Dualist Schools. The real essence of the Divine creeps into the soul of the wise man, to escape, as it were, from the creature which has passed beyond control. There is even a certain chivalry to a fallen and exiled monarch. God is “quod non vides totum, quodcunque moveris”; the thoughts of the good, the unseen world (such as a Roman could conceive it); and the tendency of all Pantheism is to separate more sharply than before the natural mechanism in which it starts, from the transcendent spirit, in which it invariably ends. Every attempt to unify the world in a gigantic and audacious synthesis issues in this strange Dualism. The unequally mated yoke-fellows spring apart all the more vehemently for their brief and enforced companionship. So Seneca, when he bids us follow Nature, because Nature is God, is not really giving us a maxim for practical life. (*Ot.* 5: “Ergo, secundum Natura vivo, si totum me illi dedi,

si illius admirator cultorque sum. Natura autem utrumque facere me voluit et agere et contemplationi vacare. Utrumque facio quoniam ne contemplatio quidem sine actione est.”)

The wise man found the unity demanded by his reason only in theory; from the life of action he felt himself debarred. Underlying the word “nature” are two polar conceptions. The one would seem to banish reflexion and immerse in a life of natural wants and pleasures; but the identification with God in the second sense lays stress on the special prerogative of man, his reason; enshrines the deity in his inmost soul (“quasi Deum in humano corpore hospitantem”); and to enable him to maintain in some region the fiction of Unity, condemns him to moral passivity and negation, or as a counsel of perfection, perpetual contemplation of the physical order,—an eternal but unmeaning spectacle.

§ 7. It is consonant with this attitude that Seneca should depreciate history, the pageant of man on the stage of time. The Romans could form no estimate of the significance of the Empire. It was reserved for foreigners in a later age, like Rutilius, or Claudian, or Corippus, or even Dante, to see the immense advance which Augustus (rather than Julius) had effected, with such ironical modesty, in political ideals. The Emperor Aurelius is free from the slightest sympathy with the past, as from any hope for the future. Rarely does he mention a historic name, except to point the moral of the futility and nothingness of men, and the things about which they toil and struggle in the brief and feverish nightmare of life. And Seneca, though he is not as blind as Tacitus or Suetonius to the meaning of



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and not in vain. Epictetus and Aurelius both seek to depreciate the body, and with it external action, by harsh and contemptuous names. These Platonic and Gnostic ideas were widely diffused and accepted in this epoch, to the lasting prejudice of morals. They are certainly clearly visible in Seneca; but the vagueness of his definition must here preclude us from attempting precise treatment. Suffice it to point out in correction of a common error, that this Dualism was far more generally predominant in Pagan than in Christian Ethics.

§ 9. I shall conclude this episode, already overlong, with a rapid summary of Seneca's tenets and characteristics, as they may be collected in the disconnected series of occasional writings. As a practical Roman seeking guidance for the single life, he objects to the degradation of Philosophy to Philology.¹ As a Stoic he adopts loyally the doctrine of the Sufficiency of "Virtue," "honestum," as the only End. As a man of experience who has mixed with men and courts, he believes all men are good by nature, but are blinded or warped by convention, and by ignorance which pursues false "goods"; the simplicity of earlier life was the Golden Age. As a Monist, he holds this Universal Nature as the true guide, which has given us the special dower of Reason, and calls us (whether we name her God or Providence or Fate) to enjoy her contemplation rather than abuse her bounty. As a Pessimist, he teaches that the true life, the genuine philosophy, is a perpetual meditation on death, exile, pain,² and poverty; for the world outside, with all its

¹ Epp. 27 (16), 45, 48, 49, 82 (9, 19, 22), 83, 88, 106, 108 (23, 35), 109 (17), 111, 113 (17, 25); *Brev. Vit.* 10.

² Ep. 114: "Nihil tamen æque tibi profuerit ad temperantiam omnium

method and order, has no correspondence to the sage's “good will,” and (unlike the theory of Descartes) the Deity cannot or will not bring about occasionalistic conformity. As a Manichee, this world-order is the Realm of Chance or Fortune, conceived as a malignant spirit, with whom the good can have no dealings. As a Personalist, he prefers example to precept, and has perhaps adopted the Stoic profession because he finds in the worthies of Roman annals living (if unconscious) patterns of scholastic “Virtue.” As a Scientist, he fails to appreciate the value of History as giving signs of advancement and of progress, as ministering comfort to our sense of weakness and failure: the only true leisure from self-improvement is to study the universal laws, not the records of human frailty. As a Probabilist, he is apt to follow the popular voice, the “consensus gentium,” rather than applaud the “heuristic” power of the speculative reason.¹ As an Agnostic, he declines to pronounce on any ultimate problem except the sufficiency of “Virtue,” the solidarity of the human brotherhood, the unity of the cosmic order; he does not flatter himself he has reached truth.² Finally, as a Mystic, his aspirations are often devotional; and the

rerum quam cogitatio brevis ævi et hujus incerti; quicquid facias, respice ad Mortem.” (Cf. also Ep. cxx., quoted on p. 65.)

¹ The attentiveness of Heaven to our prayers is proved by the manifest concurrence of human opinion and practice, not by *a priori* qualification of the God's nature. *Benef.* iv. 4: “Non surda numina et inefficaces Deos.” Similarly, personal immortality, on which he is very ambiguous, follows on popular acceptance rather than dogmatic teaching.

² *Benef.* iv. 33: “Nunquam expectare nos certissimam rerum comprehensionem quoniam in arduo est Veri exploratio; sed eâ ire, qua ducit Veri similitudo. Sequimur qua Ratio, non qua Veritas ducit,”—thus in the end a chasm yawns between the separate subjective reason and objective Truth.

Sage is the peer of God, except in eternity, for both have made "il grand rifiuto," the great renunciation.¹ Both view the world, saying, "Hæc omnia mea sunt"; but only if neither attempt to control or to enjoy; and it may be that he felt that the truly Divine in the outer order met and blended with the single point of human consciousness, and found there its highest expression, and its only secure asylum.

APPENDIX

In order to complete the portrayal of Seneca as a philosopher, and to allow him the same opportunity as we shall give to Epictetus and Aurelius, I subjoin certain selected passages on the subjects of chief Stoical import: the nature of man and of the world; the divinity of the soul and its future life; the scientific or religious interest, and the true function of the wise to contemplate rather than act. We shall detect here, without need of further comment or elucidation, the growing tendency to free the *spiritual* element (and notion) from the husk or envelope of *physical* constraint, and elevate a *transcendental* concept of soul and deity, in place of an *immanent* abstraction.

A 1. The soul as Divine; Ep. xxxi. : "Animus rectus . . . Quid aliud voces hunc, quam *Deum* in *humano corpore hospitantem*?"—Ep. xli. : "Non sunt ad cœlum elevandæ manus, nec exorandus ædituus . . . *prope* est a te Deus, *tecum* est, *intus* est. Ita dico Lucilî, sacer intra nos spiritus sedet malorum bonorumque nostr. *observator* et *custos*. . . . In

¹ Ep. xxxi. *ad fin.* : "Tutum iter est, jucundum, ad quod Natura te instruxit. Dedit tibi Illa quæ si non deserueris par Deo surges. Parem autem Deo pecunia non faciet : *Deus nihil habet*. Prætecta non faciet : *Deus nudus est*. Fama non faciet . . . *nemo novit Deum.*"

unoquoque bonorum (“quis deus incertum est”) *habitat.*” (The good man,) “majore sui parte illic est, unde descendit. Quemadmod. radii solis contingunt quidem terram sed ibi sunt unde mittuntur; sic Animus magnus et sacer, et in hoc demissus ut propius divina nossemus, conversatur quidem nobiscum, sed hæret origini suæ.”—Ep. lxxiii.: “Miraris hominem ad deos ire? Deus ad homines venit, immo quod propius est, *in homines venit.* Nulla sine Deo mens bona est. Semina in corporibus humanis divina dispersa sunt.”—Ep. xcii.: “Hic Deos æquat, illo tendit, originis suæ memor . . . Quid est autem cur non existimes in eo divini aliquid existere, qui *Dei pars* est. Totum hoc quo continemur, et unum est et Deus: et socii sumus et membra. Capax est noster animus.”—Ep. cxx.: “Perfectum animum . . . supra quem nihil est nisi mens Dei ex qua pars et in hoc pectus mortale defluxit; quod nunquam magis divinum est quam ubi mortalitatem suam cogitat.”

Ot. Sapientis, 32: “An illud verum sit quo maxime probatur, hominem divini spiritus esse partem, ac veluti scintillas quasdam sacrorum in terras desiluisse atque alieno loco hæsisse?”

Cons. ad Helv. 6: “Mobilis et inquieta mens homini data est: . . . Vaga et quietis impatiens et novitate rerum lætissima: quod non miraberis si primam ejus originem aspexeris. Non ex terreno et gravi concreta corpore; ex illo cælesti spiritu descendit . . . ex iisdem quibus divina constant compositu(s) seminibus.”

A 2. The Body is contemptible, a burden to the soaring impulse of spirit. Ep. lxxviii.: “Vir magnus ac prudens animum deducit a corpore, et multum cum meliore et *divina* parte versatur; cum hac *querula* ac *fragili* quantum necesse est.”—Ep. cii.: “Gravi terrenoque detineor. . . . Quicquid circa te jacet rerum, tanquam hospitalis loci *sarcinas* specta; transeundum est. . . . Detrahetur tibi hæc circumjecta novissimum velamentum tui cutis; detrahetur caro . . . ossa

nervique. . . . Depone onus! Æquo animo membra jam supervacua dimitte eti stud corpus inhabitatum diu pone. . . . Quid ista sic diligis quasi tua? istis opertus es." (Ishtar's descent.)

Ep. cxx.: "Nec domum esse hoc corpus sed *hospitium* et quidem breve . . . hinc atque hinc tentamur et expellimur; hoc evenire solet in *alieno* habitantibus. . . . Nos corpus tam *putre* sortiti," etc.—Ep. lxxv.: "Ista enim omnia . . . attollunt et levant animum qui gravi *sarcina* pressus explicari cupit et reverti ad illa quorum fuit. Nam corpus hoc animi *pondus* ac *pæna* est; premente illo urgetur, in *vinculis* est nisi accessit Philosophia."

Cons. ad Helv. 11: "hæc circumfusa gravis *sarcina* . . . Corpusculum hoc custodia et vinculum animi."—Ep. xxiv.: "Mortale et fragile corpusculum . . . grave corporis mei pondus."

C. Soul thus distinguished from the grosser envelope finds its chief delight in science and contemplation. *Ot. Sap.* 32: "Curiosum nobis Natura ingenium dedit; et artis sibi ac pulcritudinis suæ conscia, *spectatores* nos tantis rerum spectaculis genuit. . . . In mediâ nos sui parte constituit, et *circumspectum* omnium nobis dedit; nec erexit tantummodo hominem, sed etiam ad contemplationem . . . sublime fecit illi caput . . . ad hæc quærenda nato. . . . Natura autem utrumque facere me voluit et *agere* et *contemplationi* vacare."

Brev. Vit. 19: "Recipe te ad hæc tranquilliora, tutiora, majora! ad hæc *sacra* et sublimia accedas, sciturus quæ materia sit Diis, quæ voluptas?—quis animum tuum casus exspectet, ubi nos a corporibus dimissas Natura componat? etc. (hence will arise) cupiditatum oblivio, vivendi atque moriendi scientia, alta rerum quies."—Ep. lxxviii.: "Imbecilli fluidique per intervalla consistimus; mittamus animum ad illa quæ æterna sunt; miremur in sublimi volitantes rerum omnium formas (i. e. Ideas Platonicas); Deumque inter illa versantem."—Ep. lxxv. (Philosophy) "illum respirare Rer. Naturæ *spectaculo* jussit et a terrenis dimisit ad divina. Hæc libertas ejus est,

hæc evagatio; subducit interim se *custodiæ* in qua tenetur et cælo reficitur.”—Ep. lxxix. (This study begun here in reverent spirit is the delight of heaven hereafter for the released souls): “Licet contentus interim sit effugisse tenebras, adhuc non fruitur bono lucis. Tunc Animus noster habebit quod gratuletur sibi, quum emissus his tenebris in quibus volutatur . . . totem diem admiserit, et redditus cælo suo fuerit, quum receperit locum quem occupavit sorte nascendi. Sursum vocant illum initia sua. Erit autem illic etiam antequam hac *custodia* exsolvatur, quum vitia disjecerit . . . in divinas cogitationes emicuerit.”—Ep. lxxxii.: “(Fortuna) neminem occupat nisi hærentem sibi. Itaque quantum possumus ab illa resiliamus; quod sola præstabit *sui Naturæque cognitio*: sciat quo iturus sit, unde ortus,” etc.

Ep. lxxxviii.: “Magna et spatiosa res est Sapientia . . . de divinis humanisque discendum est . . . an per se sit aliquid, deinde an aliquid ante tempus sit, si tempus cum mundo cæperit, an et ante mundum quia fuerit aliquid, fuerit et tempus. Innumerabiles quæstiones sunt de Animo tantum; unde sit, qualis sit, quamdiu esse incipiat . . . an aliunde alio transeat et domicilium mutet, ad alias animalium formas conjectus; an non amplius quam semel serviat et emissus, vagetur in toto; . . . quomodo libertate sua usus quum ex hac effugerit cavea; an obliviscatur priorum et illic nosse se incipiat, postquam de corpore abductus in sublime secessit.”

Ep. xc. (Philosophy): “ad beatum statum tendit . . . quæ sint mala quæ videantur ostendit . . . totius *Naturæ notitiam* et suæ tradit. Quid sint Dii qualesque . . . quid inferi . . . quid in secundam Numinum formam animæ perpetuæ, ubi consistent, quid agant. . . . Hoc ejus initiamenta sunt, per quæ non *municipale sacrum*, sed ingens omnium Deorum templum mundus iste, reseratur. . . . Ad initia deinde rerum redit, et Æternam Rationem toti inditam, et vim omnium seminum singula proprie figurantem. Tum de animo cæpit inquirere unde esset, ubi, quamdiu. . . . Deinde a corporalibus

se ad *incorporalia* transtulit, Veritatemque et argumenta ejus excussit.—*Nat. Qu. I. præf.*” (Here the division betw. “actio” and “contemplatio” is called “quæ ad homines, quæ ad *deos* spectat.”) “Altior est hæc et animosior: multum permisit sibi: non fuit oculis contenta. Majus esse quiddam suspicata est ac pulcrius quod extra conspectum Natura posuisset. . . . Altera docet quid in terris agendum sit, altera quid agatur in cælo. . . . Supra hanc *caliginem* in qua volutamur excedit et tenebris ereptos illo perducit unde lucet. . . . Naturæ Rerum gratias ago . . . quum *secretiora* ejus intravi . . . quæ Universi materia sit, quis auctor aut custos: quid sit Deus: totus in se intendat an ad nos aliquando respiciat; faciat quotidie aliquid, an semel fecerit; pars Mundi sit, an Mundus; liceat illi hodieque decernere et ex lege Fatorum aliquid derogare; an majestatis deminutio sit et confessio erroris, mutanda fecisse . . . Nisi ad hæc admitterer, non fuerat nasci!” (We may note here that this passage approaches nearer to our modern conceptions of Pure Theology than the subsequent physical phenomena, in which centres the interest of the “*Nat. Quæstiones.*”) “Detrahe hoc inæstimabile bonum” (= theoretical science) “non est vita tanti. O quam contempta res est hominisi supra humana surrexerit! . . .” The secondary and cathartic value of moral purification is clearly put in a later section, and would delight Aristotle and Porphyry: “Virtus . . . magna: non quia per se beatum est malo caruisse, sed quia animum laxat ac præparat *ad cognitionem coelestium* dignumque efficit qui in consortium Dei veniat.” (Morality, as a necessary stage to be transcended, and in itself only needful because of the body, which stands in the way of the yet pure unimpeded energy of the rational soul. In this half-Neoplatonic half-scientific emphasis on intellectualism, Seneca, if he is sincere, has a far more amiable outlook on the world than his two successors. He can almost shelve the question of immortality as unmeaning, so implicit is the notion of continued life in the mastery of eternal truth. For example, do these words refer to



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circumfusam gravem sarcinam licet, celeri et *volucris cogitatione divina perlustrat* . . . liber et dis cognatus et omni mundo omnique ævo par. . . . Animus ipse *sacer et æternus* est, et cui non possunt injici manus.”—*Cons. ad Helv.* 17 (Soul best when): “animus omnis cogitationis expertis operibus suis vacat; et modo se levioribus studiis oblectat, modo ad considerandam *suam Universique naturam*, veri avidus insurgit. Terras primum situmque earum quærit; deinde conditionem circumfusi maris, cursusque ejus alternos et recursus; tunc quicquid inter cælum terrasque plenum formidinis interjacet perspicit, —et hoc tonitribus fulminibus ventorum flatibus ac nimborum nivisque et grandinis tumultuosum spatium: Tum peragratis humilioribus ad summa prorumpit, et pulcherrimo divinorum *spectaculo* fruitur, *Æternitatisque* suæ memor, in omne quod fuit futurumque est omnibus seculis, vadit.”—*Ot. Sap.* 31: “Huic majori Reipublicæ et in otio deservire possumus; immo vero nescio an in otio melius. . . .—ut *quæramus* quid sit virtus? . . . natura an ars bonos viros faciat? unum sit hoc quod maria terrasque . . . complectitur, an multa ejusmodi corpora Deus sparserit? Continua sit omnis et plena materia . . . an diducta, et solidis inane permixtum sit? Deus sedens opus suum spectet, an tractet? utrumne extrinsecus illi circumfusus sit, an toti inditus? immortalis sit Mundus an inter caduca et ad tempus nata numerandus? Hæc qui *contemplatur*, quid Deo præstat? ne tanta ejus opera sine teste sint. Solemus dicere, Summum Bonum esse secundum Naturam vivere: Natura nos ad utrumque genuit et *contemplationi* rerum et *actioni*.”

D. On Death and Immortality. In spite of this happy outlook and vast pretensions, death appearing as but an unimportant episode in the theoretic life which opens the gate of Truth still wider, there are not wanting passages of sceptical alternatives, of much perplexity about the continued existence of consciousness. Death becomes, then, as to the later Stoic leaders, a debt to the universal order, rather than

the Platonic emergence from bodily prison. *Cons. ad Polyb.* 27: “Nam si nullus defunctis sensus superest, evasit omnia pater meus vitæ incommoda; in eum restitutus locum in quo fuerat antequam nasceretur; expers omnis mali nihil timet nihil cupit nihil potitur. . . . Si est aliquis sensus;—nunc animus fratris mei velut ex diutino carcere emissus tandem sui juris et arbitrii gestit, et *Rer. Naturæ spectaculo* fruitur et humana omnia ex superiore loco despicit; *divina* vero, quorum rationem tamdiu frustra quæsierat propius *intuetur*. . . . Aut *beatus* aut *nullus* est: beatum deflere invidia est, nullum dementia.”—*Ep.* lxxvi.: “Si modo solutæ corporibus animæ manent *felicior* illis *status* restat, quam est dum versantur in corpore . . . contra fidem est feliciores esse liberis et in Universum datis clausas et obsessas.”—*Cons. ad Marc.* 19: “Cogita, nullis defunctum malis affici. . . . Mors omnium dolorum et solutio est et finis . . . nos in illam tranquillitatem in qua antequam nasceremur jacuimus reponit . . . nec potest miser esse qui *nullus* est. Excessit filius tuus terminos intra quos servitur. Exceptit illum magna et æterna pax.” 26 (Marcia’s father consoles her from his place in heaven): “Nos quoque felices animæ et æternæ sortitæ quum Deo visum erit iterum ista moliri” (= destroy the world), “labentibus cunctis, et ipsæ parva ruinæ ingentis accessio in *antiqua elementa vertemur*.”

Epist. xxiv.: “Non sum tam ineptus ut Epicuream cantilenam hoc loco persequar . . . nemo tam puer est ut Cerberum timeat! . . . Mors nos aut *consumit* aut *exiit*. Emissus meliora restant, onere detracto; consumptis nihil restat.”—*Ep.* lxiii.: “Nunc cogita omnia mortalia esse. . . . Cito nos eo perventuros quo illum pervenisse mæremus. Et fortasse, si *modo sapientum vera fama est*” (cf. *Tacit. Agric.* last §) “recepitque nos locus aliquis,—quem putamus perisse, præmissus est.”—*Ep.* lxxv.: “Mors quid est? aut *finis* aut *transitus*” (Marcus’ μεταστῆναι): in the same strain, *Ep.* lxx.: “Vis adversus hoc corpus liber esse! tanquam *migraturus* habita; propone tibi quandoque hoc *contubernio* carendum.” Then *Ep.* lxxi., with

a similar vein to Marcus' musings on the need of death for the whole: "Nobis solvi *perire* est . . . fortius finem sui suorumque pateretur, si speraret omnia illa sic in vitam mortemque per vices ire, et *composita dissolvi*, dissoluta componi: in hoc opere æternam artem cuncta temperantis Dei verti."—cii. Again with confident eloquence: "Quum venerit dies ille qui *mixtum* hoc divini humanique *secernat*, corpus hoc ubi inveni relinquam: ipse me Diis reddam. . . . Per has mortalis ævi moras illi *meliori* vitæ longiorique proluditur . . . in alium Naturæ maturescimus partum, alia origo nos exspectat; alius rerum status. . . ." Then with almost Christian rapture and ascetic fervour: "Veniet qui te revelet dies, et ex *contubernio* foedi atque olidi ventris educat. Hinc nunc quoque tu quantum potes, subvola: utique etiam necessariis quæ cohærebunt alienus. . . . Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, *æterni natalis* est! . . . Aliquando Naturæ tibi arcana retegentur, discutietur ista caligo. Imaginare tecum quantus ille sit fulgor tot sideribus inter se lumen miscentibus! . . . Quid tibi videbitur *divina lux* quum illam suo loco videris?" In the last resort, as we see from a certainly sincere statement, he falls back on popular belief; and while Philosophy may have inspired those magnificent hopes of a home among the Stars, it clearly has not strengthened its proof: "Quum de Animarum *Æternitate* disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum."

I conclude with a somewhat lengthy quotation, still rhetorical, yet perhaps the most striking of any, and recalling clearly the fundamental note of pessimism in a reflective antiquity (*τὸν φύντα θρηνεῖν*, etc.: Dio Chrysostom's Charidemus): "Si velis credere altius veritatem intuentibus, *omnis vita Supplicium est.*"

"In hoc profundum inquietumque projecti mare . . . nunquam stabili consistimus loco . . . nullus *portus* nisi *mortis* est. Ne itaque invideris fratri tuo; quiescit, tandem *liber*, tandem *tutus*, tandem *æternus* est. Fruitur nunc *aperto* et

libero cælo: ex humili atque depresso in eum emicuit *locum*, quisquis ille est, qui *solutas vinculis animas* beato recipit sinu! Et nunc libere vagatur omniaque Rerum Naturæ bona cum summa voluptate perspicit. Erras! non perdidit lucem frater tuus sed securiorem sortitus est. Omnibus illo nobis commune est iter. Quid fata deflemus? non *reliquit* ille nos, sed *antecessit*.”

E. The “Cosmopolis” and man’s special function; or the problem of the Two Natures. *Cons. ad. Marc.* 18: “Putas, nascenti me tibi venire in consilium: Intratura es *urbem dis hominibusque communem* omnia complexam certis legibus æternisque devinctam, indefatigata cœlestium officia volventem” (followed by a list of Nature’s wonders written with evident appreciation).—*Ot. Sap.* 31. (The greater Commonwealth has the more serious claims.) “*Duas Respublicas* animo complectimur, alteram magnam et vere publicam qua Dii et homines continentur; in qua non ad hunc *angulum* respicimus (*γωνίδιον*), sed *terminos Civitatis nostræ cum sole metimur*.”

Ep. xxviii.: “Non sum uni angulo natus; *patria* mea totus hic est Mundus.”—*Ep.* cii.: “Magna et generosa res est Animus; nullos sibi poni nisi *communes et cum Deo terminos* patitur. . . . Illi *patria* est, quodcunque suprema et universa circuitu suo cingit.”

2. Great emphasis on the peculiarity of endowment, of end, and therefore of perfection (=happiness). *Ep.* lxxvi.: “Omnia suo bono constant; vitem fertilitas commendat, sapor vinum, velocitas cervum. . . . Id in quoque optimum est, *cui nascitur*, quo censetur: in homine quid optimum? *Ratio*: hac animalia antecedit, Deos sequitur. . . . Homini suum bonum *Ratio* est; si hanc perfecit, laudabilis est, et *finem naturæ suæ* attigit. Hæc *Ratio* perfecta, *Virtus* vocatur eademque *honestum* est.” (So these four words are interchangeable, like God, fate, chance, Nature: the “good,” the Highest End, Virtue, Reason;—and as there is nothing in

the objective world but God, so within there is only the "good will" which is to be accounted of. (Ep. xcii. : "*Ratio vero diis hominibusque communis; hæc in illis consummata est, in nobis consummabilis.*") Ep. cxxi. : "Dicitis, inquit" (Epicurus is objecting) "omne animal primum *constitutioni suæ conciliari*" (Marcus' *κατασκευή*); "homines autem *constitutionem* rationalem esse," etc.—Ep. cxxiv. : "(Bonum) hoc quod secundum *naturam cujusque* est."—Ep. xli. (*fin.*): "Lauda in ipso quod nec eripi potest nec dari; quod *proprium* est *hominis*. Quæris quid sit? Animus et Ratio in animo perfecta. . . . Consummatur itaque ejus *bonum* si id adimplevit *cui nascitur*. Quid est autem quod ab illo Ratio hæc exigit? rem facillimam *secundum naturam suam* vivere." (See below, *Cons. ad Helv.* 8, *Propria virtus.*)

F. Traces found of a "Personalist" conception of Deity: Seneca treats all names for the ultimate forces as synonyms, and convertible (though he might be puzzled to put "Fortuna" in her right place as a mere attribute of the Supreme, as the unaccountable operations of Providence seen from the point of view of accidents). There is no need to multiply evidence of his ample identification. But one or two passages are interesting. *Cons. ad Helv.* 8 (How little the exile loses!): "duo quæ pulcerrima sunt, quocunque nos moverimus, sequentur: *Natura communis* et *propria virtus*. Id actum est mihi crede ab illo quisquis *formator* Universi fuit, sive ille *Deus* est potens omnium sive incorporalis Ratio ingentium operum artifex sive divinus *Spiritus*, per omnia, maxima, minima, æquali intentione diffusus, sive *Fatum* et immutabilis causarum inter se cohærentum series . . . ut in alienum arbitrium, nisi vilissima, non caderent."

Ep. xvi. To an objector, who not without cause complains that Reason's only benefit is to assure us of our slavery: "Quid mihi prodest Philosophia si *Fatum* est? . . . si *Deus* rector est? . . . si *casus* imperat? . . . Mutari certa non possunt:—si aut consilium meum *Deus* occupavit, decrevitque

quid facerem, aut consilio meo nil *Fortuna* permittit.’ Quicquid est ex his” (decides Seneca no less than Marcus) “vel si omnia hæc sunt, philosophandum est: Sive nos inexorabili lege *ista* constringunt, sive arbiter *Deus* universi cuncta disponit, sive *casus* res humana sine ordine impellit et jactat, philosophia nos tueri debet. Hæc adhortabitur ut *Deo* libenter pareamus, ut *Fortunæ* contumaciter resistamus.”

With which curious yet vague division of the realm of objective Nature and human experience,—a complete Manichean dualism,—we will take leave of Seneca.

PART II
THE IMMEDIATE INFLUENCE :
EPICTETUS



CHAPTER I

*EPICTETUS, OR THE NEW CYNISM ; DEVOTIONAL
PERSONIFICATION OF THE COSMIC ORDER*

(A) THE RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION OF PHILOSOPHIC
DOGMA

ANALYSIS

New devoutness towards a personal god ; Cynic missionary sent to all classes with Gospel tidings ; egoistic idealism or indifference of Buddhist ; in Epict. two opposite tendencies—(1) sympathy ; (2) hermit isolation ; Individualism (the will alone being free) ; this is all that God could bestow on His children (omnipotence limited) ; mystic communion.

IN Epictetus, a new phase passes over Stoicism. As St. Paul to Philo of Alexandria, so is Epictetus of Phrygia to Seneca of Rome. By the very urgency of personal needs, of devotional requirements, the conception of an all-embracing Force, indifferent to the particular and too abstract to be the object of prayer or



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the lay brother at his menial task. The outlook of antiquity outside a restricted yet intense patriotism was singularly cramped. Although it was seen quite early that the motive alone counts, that it is the inward temper only which ennobles or degrades the outward act, no use was made of this fruitful thought. As Anaxagoras disappointed Socrates in his use of *νοῦς*, so we find the suggestive maxim *πάντα ὑπόληψις* leading, not to the illumination of the phenomenal, of the circumstance of life, but rather to an egoistic Idealism, which denied or disregarded the concrete, to Sophistic subjectivity, to pure Buddhistic indifference. The busy and conventional activity of an average citizen was abhorrent to reflexion. The philosopher, especially after the death of Socrates, turned away from the "flamboyance" and diversity (*ποικιλία*) of the Hellenic character to meditate upon the One, and exchange eagerness for a passive rôle.

The old contempt for the handicrafts (natural enough in a slave-holding community engrossed in civic feuds) tended to increase, and to include in the same condemnation, not merely all artistic endeavour, but even the more formal political duties of active life. The philosophic ideal was a perpetual straining after a more perfect existence; but to the very last it remained empty of all positive content, a "blank luminous disc" rather than a "well-rounded sphere" (*κυκλοτερῆς σφαῖρος*),—bearing witness to the despondence and early discouragement, not to the vitality or fortitude, of the Greek mind. It was purely negative, if you like, "feminine"; and could only issue, in spite of professions of cosmopolitan sympathy, in abstention and resignation.

In Epictetus two opposite tendencies contend for the mastery, and their struggle and his effort at reconciliation add to the pathos of his character and teaching. All men to him are brothers, sons of a common parent, God Himself; and it is in this transcendental affinity that he discovers a sanction for those peculiarly human virtues, kindness, consideration, forbearance, which seem at first sight so incongruous in any creature. For the sympathetic instinct is there, unquestionably; the most puzzling problem of philosophy is to rationalize, to justify it; and, to speak frankly, from the standpoint of Stoic materialism this was impossible. Yet Epictetus, though he be a father confessor, has no special casuistry to apply to the several needs of his applicants. He has but one formula, one prescription for the cure of souls. The formula, too, sounds to us strange in the mouth of an "apostolic" teacher. It is, "Physician, heal thyself!" No one can do anything for another. Our sympathy,¹ our appeals, good offices, kindly services, only play about the surface, and never touch the deep-seated evil of the soul. "No man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him." Virtue, like the knowledge of the Sophist, is incommunicable, although we may reverently repeat the Socratic text *διδασκτὸν ἢ ἀρέτην*. The missionary can only remind his hearer of his absolute and immediate power to be wise, happy,

¹ Even this sympathy is strictly against nature, which, in spite of the co-ordination of the parts, forms of each creature an impenetrable monad, immersed only in his special but selfish function, and with no legitimate end but self-culture: "You must not be angry with wrong-doers" (Teubner, 61, *ἄνθρωπε, εἰ σὲ δεῖ παρὰ φύσιν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις κακοῖς διατίθεσθαι ἐλέει αὐτὸν μᾶλλον ἢ μίσει*). Their conduct has nothing to do with you; and, in a choice of two evils, the less culpable affection of the soul is pity,—for it is less disturbing.

and free,—his inalienable prerogative of instantaneous conversion, in spite of the long coils of evil habits, never forfeited. He can speak warmly, with fervour, unctious assurance, of the “grace of the Sonship,” to be had for the asking. One simple article of faith sufficed; that the will alone is free and self-sufficing; that all outward things, our own poor bodily framework included, can never be under our control, and are thus indifferent and immaterial to our happiness. As in Aurelius, there tends to be a division between inexorable Fate and the provident gods, dispensers of benefits, who alone can be in a true sense objects of worship. No scientific interpretation of the world can ever calm the individual’s anxiety or satisfy his sense of justice. God Himself sinks into a subordinate place, as the Platonic Demiurge; He is limited in power by a law or destiny anterior to Him. His goodness is saved by limiting His authority; and we gladly exchange an unintelligible omnipotence for the more human faculty of merciful contrivance, which brings Him nearer our level, within the scope of our comprehension.

If this “almighty power” is in theory conceded, as in the Christian system, it is at once circumscribed by a voluntary abdication, which leaves room for the reality and distinct coexistence of persons, and for the usefulness of moral effort. If these distinctions are allowed to evaporate in the night of the Absolute, it seems there is no further need of energy in search or action; nothing but the speculative self-introspection of a Deity at last awake in man, and contemplating the results of his unconscious labours with some amazement and considerable pain. Epictetus, with his practical motive and religious sentiment, never hesitates a moment. God *has*

given us all He possibly can; He could do no more. He could not "put all things under our feet," "give us dominion" (as the worthy Hebrew said in his gratitude for tangible blessings) "over the works of His hands." The Divine Being is a "God of Sorrows," pathetic in stillness and helplessness: it appeals to us to keep "holy and undefiled," untarnished, and in undimmed lustre, that tiny luminous jewel within us which is part of itself. In reaction against the grossness and unspirituality of Stoic teaching, the vague devotionism which we call the mystical spirit has spread widely since Seneca. Latent there and disguised by rhetoric, these pious aspirations to overcome the world of opposites and distinctions have now become the sum and centre of the Neo-Cynic creed. The fatherhood of God, —the brotherhood of man,—such is the staple and substance of "the Gospel which" (as Renan tells us) "will never grow old." And yet, after this plausible commonplace, in this reputed commonwealth of the Universe, such atomic isolation and reciprocal repulsion! Such immurement of the individual in the narrow prison-house of his consciousness! Such disappointing barriers to a larger and more vigorous sympathy! Such natural evanescence or discouragement of corporate action! Such oppressive despondency in the thought that, after all, God is out of place in an alien world, like the wise man who follows in His footsteps: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"! Such wistful adherence against hope to the one sheet-anchor of moral instinct, and to that one dogma which in Marcus will absorb all other articles of faith, that God is in us, "reconciling," not, indeed, "the world to Himself," but the individual soul in a blissful and indissoluble union!

(B) THE GIFT OF FREE WILL; THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD; THE DIVINITY OF SOULS; THE "COSMOPOLIS"; THE SPECIAL FUNCTION

§ 1. With increasing knowledge, with heightened activity of the State, our realm of freedom, of "one's own," shrinks to nothingness. "How much of that we once regarded as essential part of our personal self did we discover to be the resultant of influences that cross, confirm, or resist one another within us! Within narrower and ever narrower proportions shrank that in us, which we could really call our own. One part the bodily organs claimed as their contribution, another fell beneath the general psychic forces, which, by no merit of their own, work according to identical laws in all individuals. The tiny sphere alone, that which is ruled and shaped by the *freedom of our moral action*, seemed to afford an asylum to our Real Self" (Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, i. 1). If I may be allowed to quote from an earlier volume of my own: "The entire aim of post-Aristotelian thought had been to set the personal spirit free of all earthly hindrance and encumbrance—to concentrate thought upon itself. But in proportion as this effort was successful, and the Spirit released itself from all that was not germane to its true life, the realm of alien things loomed larger and larger, because ever more threatening and hostile. Such sacrifice had enriched the power of the enemy, and impoverished the territory of the man,—struggling in a vain pretence of freedom against overwhelming odds" (*School of Plato*, Bk. iv. ch. iv. § 3). This free will, ineffective beyond itself, was God's best gift to man, indeed his very self. It rose like a small point of rock

from the midst of the waters, which submerged everything else. It is the centre, not only of individual life, but of an entire scheme of anthropology. It was free, because God its giver and parent was free. It was here, not to act but to contemplate. Within it lay the good and ill of life; good, if it exercised its sovereign rights; ill, if it allowed itself to become perverted, and mistook obstinacy for principle. It was amenable to no power or influence but its own; and to convert another is only to suggest, and let the lesson work its way in: "for no man may deliver his brother." In this supreme gift, a portion of Himself, God had exhausted His bounty. He could give us nothing more that was not the mere sport of chance and circumstance. The body, covered with opprobrious epithets, dissolved partnership with this proud yet ineffectual monad: just as the world (in spite of appeal to take everything as sent by God's goodness and mercy) had really slipped from the control of Deity.

5. ὥσπερ οὖν ἦν ἄξιον, τὸ κράτιστον ἀπάντων κ. κυριεῦον οἱ θεοὶ μόνον ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐποίησαν, τὴν χρῆσιν τὴν ὀρθὴν τ. φαντασιαῖς, τὰ δ' ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῖν. Ἄρα γε ὅτι οὐκ ἤθελον; ἐγὼ μὲν δοκῶ ὅτι εἰ ἠδύναντο κακεῖν' ἀν ἡμῖν ἐπέτρεψαν· ἀλλὰ πάντως οὐκ ἠδύναντο, ἐπὶ γῆς γὰρ ὄντας κ. σώματι συνδεδεμένους τοιούτῳ κ. κοινωνοῖς τοιούτοις πῶς οἶόν τ' ἦν εἰς ταῦτα ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκτὸς μὴ ἐμποδίζεσθαι; "What saith Zeus? O Epictetus, if it had been possible, I would have made thy body of this substance free and unhindered. But let it not escape thee, all this is not thine, but mud artfully kneaded. Since I could not do this, I gave thee a part of us" (μέρος τι ἡμέτερον), this Sovereign power of willing and not willing, that uses impressions. If thou wilt

guard this carefully and place in it all that is thine, thou shalt never be stopped, never be hindered, but be always free from groan, reproach, never have need to fawn on another. What then? do these gifts seem to thee trivial? . . . art satisfied with these?—

218. “My brother has more than his share of the field.” Let him, as much as he will. *Μή τι οὖν τοῦ αἰδήμονος, μή τι τ. πιστοῦ, μή τι τοῦ φιλαδέλφου; ἐκ ταύτης γὰρ τῆς οὐσίας τίς δύναται ἐκβαλεῖν; οὐδ’ ὁ Ζεὺς. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἠθέλησεν ἀλλ’ ἐπ’ ἐμοὶ αὐτὸ ἐποίησεν κ. ἔδωκεν οἶον εἶχεν αὐτὸς ἀκώλυτον ἀνανάγκαστον ἀπαραπόδιστον.* (Cf. Rufus in the *Eclogues of Stobæus*, ii. 8: *τὸ κάλλιστον . . . ᾧ δὲ κ. αὐτὸς εὐδαίμων ἐ.*)

So 130. *Τίς εἶ; . . . ἄνθρωπος, τοῦτ’ ἐ. οὐδὲν ἔχων κυριώτερον προαιρέσεως, ἀλλὰ ταύτη τὰ ἄλλα ὑποταγμένα, αὐτὴν δ’ ἀδούλευτον κ. ἀνυπότακτον.*

310. *ζήσεις θαρρῶν. Τίνι; ᾧ μόνῳ θαρρεῖν ἐνδέχεται, τῷ πιστῷ τῷ ἀκωλύτῳ τῷ ἀναφαιρέτῳ, τοῦτ’ ἐ. τῇ προαίρει τῇ σαυτοῦ.*

330. *Τί μοι δέδωκεν ἐμὸν κ. αὐτεξούσιον; τί αὐτῷ κατέλιπεν; τὰ προαιρετικά μοι δέδωκεν, ἐπ’ ἐμοὶ πεποίηκεν ἀνεμπόδιστα ἀκώλυτα. Τὸ σῶμα τὸ πήλινον πῶς ἐδύνατο ἀκώλυτον ποιῆσαι; ὑπέταξεν οὖν τῇ τῶν Ὀλων περιόδῳ.*

361. *ὁ ὁ Ζεὺς οὐκ ἠδυνήθη ποιῆσαι . . . πάντας ἀνθρ. πείσαι τίνα ἐ. ἀγ. κ. κακά. Μὴ γὰρ δέδοται σοι τοῦτο; ἐκεῖνο μόνον σοι δέδοται, σαυτὸν πείσαι.*

256. *Προαίρεσιν γὰρ οὐδὲν δύναται κωλύσαι ἢ βλάψαι . . . εἰ μὴ αὐτὴ ἑαυτήν.* (So *Encheir.* § 48: *φιλόσοφος πᾶσαν ὠφέλειαν κ. βλάβην ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ προσδοκᾷ.*) So 92. So 193: *Προαίρεσιν τί ἐμποδίζειν πέφυκεν; ἀπροαίρετον οὐδὲν αὐτὴ δ’ ἑαυτήν διαστραφεῖσα.*

270. *Πῶς οὖν ἔτι ἀνεμπόδιστον εἶναί τι δύναται τῶν τοῦ σώματος; πῶς δὲ μέγα, ἢ ἀξιόλογον τὸ φύσει νεκρὸν*



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engrafted on the early materialism of the Porch by a natural alliance in Rome with practical endeavour, with primitive instinct, with religious belief. Socrates, who from a formal standpoint is merely the author of definition and generalisation, is, in the history of thought, notable rather for his recall of exiled gods, his unfeigned interest in others, his "superstitious" belief in a special monitor, a special mission. Epictetus, in similar fashion, mitigates the coldness of unchanging law by the warmth of allegoric language; which, though it baffles analysis and is wholly inconsistent with the rest of his creed, nevertheless represents a sincere, if vague, conviction, the triumph of Faith over Reason. From a recognition that God is our Father in a special sense, he believes all else will follow. 13. *Εἴ τις τῷ δόγματι τούτῳ συμπαθῆσαι κατ' ἀξίαν δύναίτο ὅτι γεγόναμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντες προηγουμένως κ. ὁ θεὸς πατήρ ἐ. τῶν τ' ἀνθρ. κ. θεῶν*, such an one will entertain no ignoble thought about himself (*ἀγεννές, ταπεινόν*). If "Cæsar adopt you, who could stand your intolerable pride"? *ἂν δὲ γνῶς ὅτι τοῦ Διὸς υἱὸς εἶ, οὐκ ἐπαρθήσῃ*; He continues in a strangely ascetic Platonic manner: *ἐπεὶ δὲ δύο ταῦτα ἐν τῇ γενέσει ἡμῶν ἐγκαταμέμικται, τὸ σῶμα μὲν κοινὸν πρὸς τὰ ζῶα, ὁ λόγος δὲ κ. γνώμη κοινὸν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς, ἄλλοι μὲν ἐπὶ ταύτην ἀποκλίνουσι τὴν συγγένειαν τὴν ἀτυχῆ κ. νεκρὰν, ὀλίγοι δὲ τινες ἐπὶ τὴν θείαν κ. μακαρίαν.* —So 33. The truly wise learns that this universe is *τὸ σύστημα τὸ ἐξ ἀνθρ. κ. θεοῦ*, and that from Him come all seeds, *εἰς ἅπαντα μὲν τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς γεννώμενά τε κ. φύόμενα, προηγουμένως δ' εἰς τὰ λογικά, ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον ταῦτα πέφυκε τῷ θεῷ τῆς συναναστροφῆς κατὰ τὸν λόγον ἐπιπεπλεγμένα*, why not call such an one *κόσμιον*; *διὰ τί μὴ υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ*; Shall not this

sense of sonship take away all our pain, if affinity to an earthly Cæsar makes one arrogant? (Juvenal's "tumidumque Nerone propinquo") τὸ δὲ τὸν Θεὸν ποιητὴν ἔχειν κ. πατέρα κ. κηδέμονα οὐκέτι ἡμᾶς ἐξαιρήσεται λυπῶν κ. φόβων; No student of human history, quite apart from religious conviction, will doubt the absolute efficacy of such an assurance for a life of heroic effort and martyrdom; but in our author it is an unwarrantable "poetic licence," or an accretion on Stoic Positivism.

—49. When you get hotter water than you wanted from your servant, or find the fire is out, and there's none to be had, you say: Πῶς οὖν τις ἀνάσχηται τῶν τοιούτων; Ἀνδράποδον, οὐκ ἀνέξη τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τοῦ σαυτοῦ, ὃς ἔχει τὸν Δία πρόγονον, ὥσπερ υἱὸς ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν σπερμάτων γέγονε κ. τῆς αὐτῆς ἀνωθεν καταβολῆς; (cf. St. John i. 12, 13, iii. 7), οὐ μεμνήσῃ τί εἶ κ. τινῶν ἄρχεις; ὅτι συγγενῶν, ὅτι ἀδελφῶν φύσει, ὅτι τοῦ Διὸς ἀπογόνων. He sweeps aside the next pretext of absolute ownership with magnificent indignation and contempt for the material fabric and social conventions, "But I bought him with my own money." "Do you see where you are looking? To earth, to this pit of confusion, to these miserable legal fictions of dead men, not to the eternal laws of heavenly ordinance!" (εἰς τὴν γῆν, εἰς τὸ βάραθρον, εἰς τοὺς ταλαιπώρους τούτους νόμους τοὺς τῶν νεκρῶν, εἰς δὲ τοὺς τῶν θεῶν οὐ βλέπεις). Hercules, through his life, spent in perpetual toil and exile, was never anxious about his children. 289: οὐ στένων οὐδὲ ποθῶν οὐδ' ὡς ὀρφανούς ἀφίεις ἤδει γὰρ ὅτι οὐδεὶς ἐ. ἄνθρ. ὀρφανός, ἀλλὰ πάντων ἀεὶ κ. διηνεκῶς ὁ Πατήρ ἐ. ὁ κηδόμενος. For to Hercules it was no mere report or theoretic belief that Zeus was the father of men (μεχρι λόγου . . .) ὃς γε κ. αὐτοῦ Πατέρα ᾤετο αὐτὸν κ. ἐκαλεῖ, κ.

πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἀφορῶν ἔπραττεν ἅ ἔπραττεν. And therefore, in and through this consciousness, he could always live happily (*πανταχοῦ ἐξῆν αὐτῷ διάγειν εὐδαιμόνως*). For our father has made us for happiness; it is our own fault if we put not our hand to the fruit hanging within our reach, *ἂν δὲ τις ἀτυχῆ, (287) μέμνησο ὅτι παρ' αὐτὸν ἀτυχεῖ. Ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς πάντας ἀνθρ. ἐπὶ τὸ εὐδαιμονεῖν, ἐπὶ τὸ εὐσταθεῖν ἐποίησεν.—311.* With superb faith, like the Psalmist, “Yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.” *Οὕτως ὁ Θεὸς ἀμελεῖ τῶν αὐτοῦ ἐπιτευγμάτων . . . διακόνων . . . μαρτύρων; οἷς μόνοις χρῆται παραδείγμασιν πρὸς τοὺς ἀπαιδεύτους ὅτι κ. ἔστι, κ. καλῶς διοικεῖ τὰ ὅλα κ. οὐκ ἀμελεῖ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων, κ. ὅτι ἀνδρὶ ἀγαθῷ οὐδὲν ἐ. κακὸν, οὔτε ζῶντι οὔτ' ἀποθανόντι,* = “that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Heb. xi. 6). “What, when He gives them no food, and allows them to starve?” Yes, *ὡς ἀγαθὸς στρατηγὸς τὸ ἀνακλητικόν μοι σεσήμαγκεν πείθομαι, ἀκολουθῶ, ἐπευφημῶν τὸν ἡγέμονα, ὑμῶν αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα.*—But the analogy is incomplete and unconvincing: a common peril, a common purpose unites the general with his soldiers, nay, a common justice, which allows no favourites, and exposes all in turn to a like personal danger; but the Stoical Deity has no purpose, runs no danger himself, and maintains no correspondence between desert and recompense.—The philosophic Exemplar is now Diogenes, the nearest approach to the Wise Man, as yet undiscovered: he has superseded Socrates in popular reverence for saints. 338. He has become a supreme type of holiest ascetic renunciation (but it is the ready sacrifice of limbs by the Star-fish, and Tolstoian non-resistance to vile): and this because the



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τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔχεις ἐν σαυτῷ μέρος ἐκείνου . . . οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι θεὸν τρέφεις, θεὸν γυμνάζεις; θεὸν περιφέρεις τάλας κ. ἀγνοεῖς! . . . αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ παρόντος ἔσωθεν κ. ἐφορῶντος πάντα κ. ἐπακούοντος, are you not ashamed to think and do what you would not dare to, before his image in the Temple! ὦ ἀναίσθητε τῆς σαυτοῦ φύσεως! (cf. 156, 157, where παρακολουθεῖν τῷ διοικοῦντι τὰ ὅλα is coupled with ἐκείνον ἐν σαυτῷ περιφέρειν). What precise meaning can be attached to the notion is impossible to define; sometimes the "Deity within" is a sort of burnished silver idol; sometimes a guardian angel with plenary powers; sometimes an insulted and forgotten sovereign sitting apart in a palace where rebels carouse.—373. The Soul is the true man; ἀπονείμων κὰν ὀλίγον χρόνον τῷ σαυτοῦ Ἡγεμονικῷ σκέψαι τί ποτ' ἔχεις τοῦτο κ. πόθεν ἐληλυθὸς, . . . if all your time be given to externals (τὰ ἐκτὸς) you will keep this squalid and neglected (ρύπαρὸν κ. ἀτημέλητον).

§ 4. This doctrine of the essential kinship of man with God in a highly spiritual sense, leads naturally to the doctrine of the COSMOPOLIS, and man's duty as a subordinate part of a great whole.—117. If you are a separate entity, detachable from the rest (ἀπόλυτον), by all means live your own life; εἰ δὲ ὡς . . . μέρος Ὀλοῦ τινος σκοπεῖς, δι' ἐκείνο τὸ Ὀλον νῦν μὲν νοσῆσαι καθήκει . . . πλεῦσαι . . . κινδυνεῦσαι . . . ἀπορηθῆναι . . . πρὸ ὥρας ἀποθανεῖν. Τί οὖν ἀγανακτεῖς; . . . τί γὰρ ἐ. ἄνθρωπος; μέρος πόλεως πρώτης μὲν τῆς ἐκ θεῶν κ. ἀνθρώπων μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ τῆς ὡς ἔγγιστα λεγομένης, ἥτις ἐ. μικρὸν τῆς ὅλης μίμημα.—131. Πολίτης εἰ τοῦ Κόσμου κ. μέρος αὐτοῦ, οὐχ ἐν τῶν ὑπηρετικῶν ἀλλὰ τῶν προηγουμένων . . . Τίς οὖν ἐπαγγελία

πολίτου; μηδὲν ἔχειν ἰδίᾳ συμφέρον, περὶ μηδένοσ βουλευέσθαι ὡσ ἀπόλυτον. This due to your power of rationally following the divine ordering (παρακολουθητικὸσ τῆ θείᾳ διοικήσει κ. τοῦ ἐξῆσ ἐπιλογιστικὸσ). If foot or hand had reason (λογισμὸσ), they would never desire or aim except in reference to the welfare of the whole body (ἢ ἐπανενέγκοντες ἐπὶ τὸ "Ὀλον). "If the true gentleman knew the future" (so well speak our philosophers), "he would have co-operated in his own illness and death and mutilation,"—knowing that ἀπὸ τῆσ τῶν "Ὀλων διατάξεωσ τοῦτο ἀπονέμεται, κυριώτερον δὲ τὸ "Ὀλον τοῦ μέρουσ κ. ἢ πόλισ τοῦ πολίτου. We may note, *first*, that it is hard to distinguish a very proper resignation to the inevitable from a culpable negligence or indifference to ordinary preventive measures; so in modern India, to adopt means to control plague or famine is to oppose the Will of God;—*second*, that here we have full-fledged that tyrannical Realism, the superiority of whole to part, of abstract to concrete, of name to thing,—which will dominate a certain phase of semi-mystical thought throughout mediæval times;—*thirdly*, how comforting was the sense of being a portion of God, and how very discouraging is the sense of being also a part of a physical universe, which is emphasised here! the one thought all radiance and peace and loving acquiescence; the other, all harshness and callous expediency. The end justifies the means; the individual is nothing; the agent is a mere instrument:—and this in the interests of the higher morality! but clearly an ethical relation implies a personal object.—Sometimes Epictetus (who, we must remember, is under no contract or obligation to be consistent) seeks to unite the two aspects, by dwelling on the absoluteness

and arbitrary power of God, as a master of slaves, as in the Gospel, “taking leave of his servants.”—264. In a well-regulated household no one may suddenly say to himself, “I ought to be steward”; *εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἐπιστραφεὶς ὁ κύριος κ. ἰδὼν αὐτὸν σοβαρῶς διατασσόμενον, ἐλκύσας ἔτεμεν* (“The Lord turned and looked upon him,” as he is beating his fellow-servants, and “cut him asunder,” appointing him his due portion),—*οὕτω γίνεται κ. ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ ταύτῃ Πόλει· ἔστι γὰρ τις κ. ἐνθάδ’ οἰκοδεσπότης ἕκαστα διατάσσειν*, giving to each their rôle (which Plato left to the prenatal choice of mortals, *θεὸς ἀναίτιος*), somewhat unwisely for a professed Theodicy. “You be the sun; you, again, a heifer, when the lion comes, do your part; else you shall repent. You be a bull, come forth and fight; for this is your fitting function. You, again, can lead an army to Troy; so be Agamemnon. You can meet Hector in single combat; be you Achilles!”—288. *Ὁ Κόσμος οὗτος μία πόλις ἐ. κ. ἡ οὐσία ἐξ ἧς δεδημιούργηται μία, κ. ἀνάγκη περιόδου τινα εἶναι κ. παραχώρησιν ἄλλων ἄλλοις*: where we may note Aurelius’ favourite apology;—the consubstantiality of the world, the fleetingness of the part, the rearrangement of constituents scattered by the dissolution of an organism, the need of this to keep the whole bright and new by perpetual change. So 371: *ἅπαξ μαθὼν ὅτι τὸ γινόμενον κ. φθαρῆναι δεῖ, ἵνα ὁ Κόσμος μὴ ἴσθηται μήδ’ ἐμποδίζεται*,—corresponding exactly to that meditation on the transience of physical objects, brief compounds soon resolved, which comprises the whole of Aurelius’ speculative knowledge; and is all the lesson the Universe has to teach him.



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is religion, and this alone! It is this sense which is lost in the materialism of Aurelius' system, and retained anomalously in the candour of Aurelius' piety. Seeing this, the good man τὴν αὐτοῦ γνώμην ὑποτέταχεν τῷ διοικοῦντι τὰ Ὅλα ὡσπερ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ πολῖται τῷ νόμῳ τῆς πόλεως. The analogy here, again, breaks down; human society is after all a *voluntary* association; what escape or asylum is there for the disillusioned citizen of the world? So, again, on life's trials he uses another simile, which, like all Stoic comparisons, is only half true! God is sending you labours, chastening "every son whom He receiveth"; and Hercules is a type of such toils cheerfully borne: 74: Αἱ περιστάσεις ἐ. αἱ τοὺς ἄνδρας δεικνυούσαι· λοιπὸν ὅταν ἐμπέσῃ περίστασις, μέμνησο ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς σε ὡς ἀλείπτῃς τραχεῖ νεανίσκῳ συμβέβληκεν. Very good; but for what ulterior motive? not surely for the "advance to infinity," which is no argument or justification; that your stout fight may be an example to another, and he again may pass on the torch of this purposeless fortitude?

For the end is ἵνα Ὀλυμπιονίκῃς γένῃ· δίχα δ' ἰδρῶτος οὐ γίγνεται. So 272: οὐ πέπεισται δ' ὅτι ἂν πάσχη τούτων, ὅτι Ἐκεῖνος αὐτὸν γυμνάζει; ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν Ἡρακλῆς ὑπ' Εὐρύσθεως γυμναζόμενος . . . ἀόκνως ἐπετέλει πάντα· οὗτος δ' ὑπὸ τοῦ Διὸς ἀθλούμενος . . . μέλλει κεκραγῆναι κ. ἀγανακτεῖν. So 304. God sends his saints to Gyara and to prison; οὐ μισῶν· μὴ γένοιτο· τίς δὲ μισεῖ τὸν ἄριστον τῶν ὑπηρετῶν τῶν αὐτοῦ; οὐδ' ἀμελῶν ὅς γε οὐδὲ τῶν μικροτάτων τινος ἀμελεῖ, ἀλλὰ γυμνάζων¹ κ. μάρτυρι πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους

¹ In a similar strain Seneca, *De Provid.* 2: "Omnia adversa exercitationes putat. . . . Athletas videmus. . . . cum fortissimis configere, etc. Marcet sine adversario Virtus. . . . Patrium habet Deus adversus

χρώμενος. *Εἰς τοιαύτην ὑπηρεσίαν καταταγαγμένος, οὐχὶ ὅλος πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τέταμαι;* This is, of course, emotional and pietistic, but quite inadmissible; in a monistic universe this spectacle of struggle and endeavour, where there is no triumph to achieve, is merely the sanguinary gladiatorial exhibition which gratifies the vanity of a despicable tyrant; “*Morituri Cæsar te salutant.*” So 312: *Τρυφᾶν μὲ οὐ θέλει οὐδὲ γὰρ τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ παρείχεν τῷ υἱεῖ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ, . . . ὁ δ’ ἐπετάσσετο κ. ἐπόνει κ. ἐγυμνάζετο . . . ἀπάσης γῆς κ. θαλάττης ἄρχων κ. ἡγεμῶν καθαρτῆς ἀδικίας κ. ἀνομίας . . . κ. ταῦτ’ ἐποίει κ. γυμνὸς κ. μόνος.*

§ 6. Surely the good must be happy; 290: *Τίς δὲ καλὸς τε κ. ἀγαθὸς δυστυχεῖ; τῷ ὄντι κακῶς διοικεῖται τὰ Ὅλα, εἰ μὴ ἐπιμελεῖται ὁ Ζεὺς τῶν ἑαυτοῦ πολιτῶν, ἵν’ ὧσιν ὁμοῖοι αὐτῷ εὐδαίμονες.*—In 352 the sum of practical happiness is (as always in Epictetus) gathered up into a brief formula; here, curiously, the scientific and the religious aspects of the world are intermingled and confused. *Μία ὁδὸς ἐπὶ εὐροίαν*

bonos Viros animum, et illos fortiter amat, et ‘operibus’ inquit ‘doloribus ac damnis exagitantur, ut verum colligant robur!’ . . . Miraris tu si Deus ille bonorum amantissimus, etc. . . . Non fuit Diis Imm. satis spectare Catonem semel; retenta ac revocata Virtus est ut in difficiliore parte se ostenderet” (where the comparison of such a deity to a sanguinary spectator of the arena is fully justified). 4: “*Hos itaque Deus quos probat quos amat, indurat, recognoscit, exercet . . . in castris quoque periculosa fortissimis imperantur . . . Dux lectissimos mittit . . . Nemo . . . dicit ‘male de me imperator metuit,’ sed ‘bene judicavit’ . . . digni visi sumus Deo in quibus experiretur quantum humana natura posset pati.*” (The misleading and fallacious character of this simile has been already pointed out.) . . . “*Quid mirum si durè generosos spiritus Deus tentat? nunquam virtutis molle documentum est.*” (Perhaps this language of pious resignation scarcely conceals the latent defiance; 6: “*Hoc est quo Deum antedatis: Ille extra patientiam malorum est, vos supra.*”)

. . . ἀπόστασις τῶν ἀπροαιρέτων, τὸ μηδὲν ἴδιον ἡγεῖσθαι, τὸ παραδοῦναι πάντα τῷ δαιμονίῳ, τῇ Τύχῃ ἐκείνους ἐπιτρόπους αὐτῶν ποιήσασθαι οὗς κ. ὁ Ζεὺς πεποίηκεν (viz. the undeserving rich and powerful), αὐτὸν δὲ πρὸς ἐνὶ εἶναι μόνῳ τῷ ἰδίῳ τῷ ἀκωλύτῳ. —Here again it is purely religious in tone; 345: Ἐλεύθερος γὰρ εἶμι κ. φίλος τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵν' ἐκῶν πείθωμαι αὐτῷ. 328. "I have never been prevented willing, nor unwilling forced; how is this?" προσκατατάταχά μου τὴν ὀρμὴν τῷ Θεῷ. Θέλει μ' ἐκείνος πυρέσσειν· καὶ γὰρ θέλω . . . ἀποθανεῖν οὖν θέλω· στρεβλωθῆναι οὖν θέλω. In 385, comforting death, Epictetus addresses a personal Deity quite after the Christian fashion: Ἄς ἔλαβον ἀφορμὰς πρὸς τὸ αἰσθεσθαί σου τῆς διοικήσεως κ. ἀκολουθῆσαι αὐτῇ, τούτων οὐκ ἠμέλησα· οὐ κατήσχυνα σε· μή ποτε σε ἐμεμψάμην . . . δυσηρέστησα . . . ὅτι με σὺ ἐγέννησας χάριν ἔχων ἔδωκας· ἐφ' ὅσον ἐχρησάμην τοῖς σοῖς, ἀρκεῖ μοι. Πάλιν αὐτὰ ἀπόλαβε κ. κατάταξον εἰς ἣν θέλεις χώραν. Σὰ γὰρ ἦν πάντα, σύ μοι αὐτὰ δέδωκας . . . τίς βίων κρείττων; . . . ποία καταστροφή εὐδαιμονεστέρα; 370: αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἐκείνο θέλω τὸ γινόμενον. Κρείττον γὰρ ἡγοῦμαι ὃ ὁ Θεὸς θέλει ἢ ὃ ἐγὼ. Προσκείσομαι διάκονος κ. ἀκόλουθος ἐκείνῳ, συνορμῶ συνορέγομαι ἀπλῶς συνθέλω.



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more astonishing than to notice the universal approbation of the enlightened nineteenth century for these two latter characters. Surely it has absolutely forgotten its starting-point, its very "raison d'être." The essence of the modern spirit is to expel the depressing abomination which hands men over to tyranny in the politic, to stagnation in the social, to superstition in the religious; "whatever is, is right." Fetich-worship of the natural order is entirely unreasonable. Nature is not God's will at all, but mainly our own creation; a useful quarry for our comforts and discoveries; stronger than poor humanity, it is true, but to be evaded, cajoled, deceived, forced, anything but worshipped as divine. It is difficult to understand how Matthew Arnold could have written the following words:¹ "It is remarkable," he writes of Aurelius, "how little of a merely local or temporary character, how little of those *scoriæ* which a reader has to clear away before he gets to the precious ore, how little that even admits of doubt and question,—the morality of Marcus exhibits." "In general, the action Marcus prescribes is action which every sound nature must recognise as right, and the motives he assigns are motives which every clear reason must recognise as valid." We might be back in the eighteenth century, the Age of Reason, in this complacent appeal to teleology of Nature and our rational faculty. The whole presupposition on which Epictetus' and Marcus' ethic depends is that we have no control over things

¹ Even if we remember how far we are separated in thought from his standpoint, how the process of never-ending analysis has placed *moral* ideas in the same category as *theological*, showing that either they depend mutually on each other, or that both are equally insecure.

or circumstances, and must bow to destiny. Since Bacon's time, we have utterly rejected this belief; and all schemes of improvement, secular and religious alike, rest in large measure upon our confident transformation of our surroundings. As to that reverential "kissing of the rod," there is no place any longer for such a theory. As to the primacy of this inner spark, there is no such Manichean belief in its independence or its authority. As to the Supreme Centre of Life in the universe, if it is found merely active in the material realm, it is not much concern of ours, and we will drive it as we have driven gnomes and fairies from their rustic domains: "Great Pan is dead." If traces of its footsteps are rather to be discovered in the historic and social life of humanity, still more clearly perchance in individual life, in the instinctive hope of the race for another life,—*ἄλλης ἀν εἴη σκέψεως*; for here the Stoics with their intense self-consciousness and intense scorn of personality cannot help us: we cannot meet on equal terms; and there is no common starting-point for our discussion.

Equally fallacious, or rather self-deceptive, is Renan's eulogy, which would apply with equal exactness either to Epictetus or to his pupil Marcus: "La religion de Marc Aurèle est la *religion absolue*, celle qui resulte du simple fait d'une haute conscience morale, placée en face de l'univers. Elle n'est d'aucune race ni d'aucun pays. Aucune révolution, aucun changement, aucune découverte,—ne pourront la changer." And we have this inconsiderate and meaningless praise from one who is a high priest of the Scientific Spirit. Since he cannot detect that the whole hypothesis of life has changed after the liberation of the citizen and the discoveries of

modern thought, it is waste time to enlarge on his total misconception. Stoicism is just the one phase of semi-scientific, semi-mystical thought which can never recur. We have severed finally and completely the two realms of human life and activity. The Moral Consciousness, confronted with the problem of the Universe, will either, with Kant, proceed through the curious foreignness of the moral instinct to the three corollaries, which Stoics deny; or, despairing of correspondence in an alien world with its inward aspirations (not, indeed, a demand for pleasure, but for mere justice), it will range itself with the complacent and scholarly pessimism of Schopenhauer, or with the open revolt of Nietzsche or Gorki.

§ 2. Indeed, these rhetorical eulogists seem to have penetrated but little into the inner core of this practical Stoicism. Resignation was pure expediency; and Epictetus at least shows that here is supreme justification for his maxim; that along this path of least resistance lay the road, the only road, to happiness and peace. He never for a moment elevates an altruistic standard; never speaks in vague and lofty language of the calls of duty, apart from personal interest. It was the mere determination to be unassailable, to offer no weak spot in the fort, no hostage to fortune. A consistent and unperturbed life could be secured by mastering a few rules, by making up one's mind that the control of things and events and persons could never be ours. If we "anticipate" (as it were)¹ the disappoint-

¹ For all particular morality, behaviour in detail, is the recognition of the minor premise: *ἐφαρμογή τῶν προλήψεων ταῖς ἐπὶ μέρος οὐσίαις*,—testing power of the will applying the touchstone of preconceived rules which could assuredly never be derived from individual experience.



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a somewhat different trend in man, and seems to over-leap the span of mortal existence with a sense of wider expediency, does not in the least alter its original and historic character—Individualism. In 17 he condemns scientific research (ἐπὶ τὴν ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις ἔξιν τέτασθαι) because it in no way assists this inner life; he bids him straightway go home κ. μὴ ἀμελεῖν τῶν ἐκεῖ· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐφ' ὃ ἀποδεδήμηκεν οὐδὲν ἐ. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο μελετᾶν ἐξελεῖν τοῦ βίου πένθη κ. οἰμωγὰς κ. τὸ οἷ μοι κ. τὸ Τάλας ἐγώ.—49. The Χρήσις φαντασιῶν alone in your control; τί οὖν ἐπισπᾶς σεαυτῷ ταῦθ' ὧν ἀνυπεύθυνος εἶ; τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἑαυτῷ παρέχειν πράγματα.—71: ἐγὼ γὰρ πέφυκα πρὸς τὸ ἐμὸν συμφέρον.—161: Διὰ τί δυστυχεῖς; διὰ τί θέλοντος σοῦ τι οὐ γίνεται, κ. μὴ θέλοντος γίνεται; ἀπόδειξις γὰρ αὕτη μεγίστη δυσροίας κ. κακοδαιμονίας.—145. The ἔργον τοῦ φιλοσοφοῦντος is this; ὅτι δεῖ τὴν αὐτοῦ βούλησιν συναρμόσαι τοῖς γινομένοις ὡς μήτε τι . . . ἀκόντων ἡμῶν γινέσθαι, κτλ. Ἐξ οὗ περίεστι . . . μὴ ἀποτυγχάνειν . . . μὴ περιπίπτειν, ἀλύπως ἀφόβως ἀταράχως διεξάγειν.—158: Ὡς ἀπηλλαγμένος δουλείας τόλμησον ἀναβλέψας πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, εἰπεῖν ὅτι Χρῶ μοι λοιπὸν εἰς ὃ ἂν θέλης ὁμογνωμονῶ σοι, σός εἰμι.—335: Αὕτη ἡ ὁδὸς ἐπ' ἐλευθερίαν ἄγει, αὕτη μόνη ἀπαλλαγὴ δουλείας, τὸ δυνηθῆναί ποτ' εἰπεῖν ἐξ ὅλης ψυχῆς τὸ
ἄγου δέ μ' ὦ Ζεῦ, κτλ.

291. The θεομάχος who fights against Heaven's decrees, like the tragic sufferers, is always anxious and miserable, πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀπαγγελίαν τρέμων, ἐξ ἐπιστολῶν ἀλλοτρίων (Seneca's emphatic "aliena opinio") ἡρτημένην ἔχων τὴν ἑμαυτοῦ ἀπάθειαν. . . . To the fool who will not be free he says in contempt: Κάθησο τοίνυν πρὸς πάντα ταῦτα ἐπτοημένος πενθῶν ἀτυχῶν δυστυχῶν ἐξ ἄλλου ἡρτημένος.—305, 306: Οὐ γὰρ ὑπὲρ πάλης κ. παγκρατίου ὁ ἀγὼν

προκείται . . . ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς εὐτυχίας κ. εὐδαιμονίας.—
 320. This personal assurance, inward calm, peace, subjective happiness is what all men seek: τί γὰρ ἐ. ὃ ζητεῖ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος; εὐσταθῆσαι, εὐδαιμονῆσαι, πάνθ' ὡς θέλει ποιεῖν, μὴ κωλύεσθαι.¹—362: Οὐ θέλεις ἀφείς τοὺς ἄλλους αὐτὸς σαυτῷ γένεσθαι κ. μαθητῆς κ. διδάσκαλος;—352: Ἄφες οὖν ταῦτα πάντα. “Καλαὶ αἱ Ἀθῆναι.” Ἀλλὰ τὸ εὐδαιμονεῖν κάλλιον πολὺ τὸ ἀπαθῆ εἶναι τὸ ἀτάραχον τὸ ἐπὶ μηδένι κείσθαι τὰ σὰ πράγματα.—368: Τί κωλύει ζῆν κούφως κ. εὐηνίως πάντα τὰ συμβαίνειν δυνάμενα πράως ἐκδεχόμενον; 378. The foolish man says, θέλω τι κ. οὐ γίνεται ἐγὼ ἀτυχῆς εἰμί. The proficient who is vain and proud of his advance says, ἀπαθῆς εἰμι κ. ἀτάραχος· μὴ ἀγνοεῖτε ὦ ἀνθ., ὅτι ὑμῶν κυκωμένων κ. θορυβουμένων περὶ τὰ μηδένοσ ἀξια, μόνος ἐγὼ ἀπήλλαγμαί πάσης ταραχῆς. Though Epictetus repudiates this as vulgar display, κενὸν κ. φορτικόν, yet it is obvious that he is secretly in full sympathy with the maxim of Lucretius, *Suave mari magno . . . alterius spectare laborem*, ii. 1. So happiness, a purely personal matter, is (as to Marcus) completely under one's control. 383: Θεληῆσαι δεῖ κ. γέγονεν, διώρθωται . . . Ἐσωθεν γάρ ἐστι κ. ἀπώλεια κ. βοήθεια.

It follows naturally from this emphasis on the inner temper (91: Τοῦτον τὸν νόμον ὁ Θεὸς τέθεικε κ. φησὶν “εἰ τι ἀγαθὸν θέλεις, παρὰ σεαυτοῦ λάβε”) that other men interest the introspective philosopher but little.—
 158: Οὐκ εἰ Ἡρακλῆς κ. οὐ δύνη καθαίρειν τὰλλότρια

¹ Seneca, *Tranq. Animi*: “Quid desideras autem magnum et summum est Deoque vicinum, non concuti. Hanc stabilem animi sedem Græci ‘εὐθυμίαν’ vocant, de qua Democriti egregium volumen est; ego Tranquillitatem voco.” Compare Diog. Laert. ix. 45: Εὐθυμίαν . . . καθ' ἣν γαληνῶσ κ. εὐσταθῶσ ἡ ψυχὴ διάγει ὑπὸ μηδένοσ ταραττομένη φόβου ἢ δεισιδαιμονίας ἢ ἄλλου τινος πάθους.

κακὰ ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Θήσευς ἵνα τὰ τῆς Ἀπτικῆς καθάρης τὸ σαυτοῦ κάθαρον. He controls the eager and meddling philanthropist whose zeal outruns knowledge and discretion; 245 : *Εὐθέως ὡς σοφοὶ διάγειν ἐθέλομεν κ. ὠφελεῖν ἀνθρώπους. Ποίαν ὠφέλειαν; τί ποιεῖς; σαυτὸν γὰρ ὠφέλησας; Ἀλλὰ προτρέψαι αὐτοὺς θέλεις. Σὺ γὰρ προτέτρεψαι; . . . δείξον αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ σεαυτοῦ οἶους ποιεῖ φιλοσοφία, κ. μὴ φλυᾶρει! ἐσθίων, πίνων, εἴκων πᾶσιν, ἀνεχόμενος,—οὕτως αὐτοὺς ὠφέλει κ. μὴ κατεξέρα αὐτῶν τὸ σαυτοῦ φλέγμα!*

(B) CLOSE RESTRICTION OF THE SPHERE OF MISSIONARY INFLUENCE; REJECTION OF CIVIC OR DOMESTIC DUTIES BY THE TRUE ANCHORITES

ANALYSIS

§ 3. *The Cynic an exemplar rather than active consoler of men.*

§ 4. *Gnostic and Manichean scorn of human ties.*

§ 3. True, he sometimes refers to his religious mission, but it is as a passive example, almost a lay figure, rather than as active teacher and consoler; 266 : *Εἰδέναί δει ὅτι ἄγγελος ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς ἀπέσταλται . . . περὶ ἀγαθῶν κ. κακῶν, ὑποδείξων αὐτοῖς ὅτι πεπλάνηνται κ. ἀλλαχοῦ ζητοῦσι τὴν οὐσίαν* of these two.—Or he is a spy or scout sent forward into the land of promise to reconnoitre, with clearer vision than the rest, to tell where true happiness may be found: *Τῷ γὰρ ὄντι κατάσκοπός ἐ. ὁ Κυνικός τοῦ τίνα ἐ. τοῖς ἀνθρ. φιλά κ. τίνα πολέμια.* This mission is quite incompatible with ordinary ties of home-life. 273 : *Ἀπερίσπαστον εἶναι, δεῖ τὸν Κυνικὸν ὅλον πρὸς τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐπιφοιτᾶν ἀνθρώποις δυνάμενον, οὐ προσδεδεμένον καθήκουσιν ἰδιωτικοῖς*



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τοῦτο γὰρ ἀλλότριον, but that while they acted according to their nature, he might also keep to his (ὅπως ἐκείνων τὰ ἴδια ποιούντων ὡς αὐτοῖς δοκεῖ, αὐτὸς μηδὲν ἤττον κατὰ φύσιν ἔξει.¹—For 361: Ἐκεῖνα μόνον σοι δέδοται, σαυτὸν πείσαι. He is glad, however, to be able in the more social days of the Roman Empire to have the figure of Socrates to set up for men's imitation. He is quite aware of the general impression which is left by Cynical preaching. Καὶ ἵνα μὴ δόξης,—339: ὅτι παράδειγμα δείκνυμι, ἀνδρὸς ἀπεριστάτου μήτε γυναῖκ' ἔχοντος μήτε τέκνα μήτε πάτριδα ἢ φιλοῦς ἢ συγγενεῖς, ὑφ' ὧν κάμπτεσθαι κ. περισπᾶσθαι ἠδύνατο, λαβὲ Σωκράτη κ. θεάσαι γ. κ. παῖδια ἔχοντα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἀλλότρια.—He is much annoyed when on his discountenancing matrimony, the interlocutor inquires: Πῶς οὖν ἔτι διασώσει τὴν κοινωνίαν; τὸν θεόν σοι! μείζονα δ' εὐεργετοῦσιν ἀνθρώπους οἱ ἢ δύο ἢ τρία κακόρρυγχα παῖδια ἀνθ' αὐτῶν εἰσάγοντες, ἢ οἱ ἐπισκοποῦντες πάντα κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνθρ. τί ποιοῦσιν, πῶς διάγουσιν, . . . τίνος ἀμελοῦσι παρὰ τὸ προσῆκον; all this is very true in a way, but such scornful language of pride and isolation seems to partake of that vulgar complacence (κενὸν κ. φορτικόν) which he rightly repudiated above.

§ 4. It is quite easy to induce in some minds a kind of ascetic morality by dwelling on the squalid side of natural processes, by pitying Hooker very much when he is found rocking the cradle, by exciting and stimulating a disgust (ready enough to hand in most minds) at the mysterious union of the noblest and the most ignoble in human love. Marcus will be found even more emphatic; he analyses physical passion until nothing remains but the sordid

¹ So to the tyrant, there is no animosity, no reproof; "You must cut off my head? Very well, you do your part; I will do mine."

and contemptible. While many may perhaps secretly sympathize with this, no one can help feeling disappointment when Epictetus dismisses the holiest relationship of parent and child with a realistic epithet. In a word, the moral system of Epictetus and Aurelius is a revived Cynism which, however, it may compromise and modify and make concessions to common sense and ordinary decorum, is at root profoundly anti-social and subjectivist. It substitutes for Socrates as the typical man a figure of Diogenes seen through a halo of saintship which he was far from deserving; and it is not without interest to notice that the Emperor Julian has the same extravagant admiration for the least estimable of Hellenic moralists.

(C) THE SAGE SPECTATOR RATHER THAN AGENT IN
THE UNIVERSE

ANALYSIS

§ 5. *Man, like the gentry at a fair or race-meeting, comes into this world merely to look on.*

§ 5. The philosopher, foiled or impotent in his attempts at reform, holding a cynical isolation to be the highest life, has interwoven with these coarser threads the more refined curiosity and respect for Nature. Citizen of the larger commonwealth, he surveys the Universe as spectator, in that attitude of semi-mystic contemplation and worship which effectually prevents a utilitarian attitude to things, or a sincere interest in the human community. Epictetus rightly insists on the "difference of function," though his teleology is childish, and harmonises ill with the Stoical impersonality of the creative energy (22, 23).

The distinction of men and animals is just this reflection, which puts an end once for all to our paradisaic innocence and enjoyment: the παρακολουθητική δύναμις.

22. God has need of animals and of men; ἐκείνων . . . χρωμένων ταῖς φαντασίαις, ἡμῶν δὲ παρακολουθούτων τῇ χρήσει· ἐκείνοις μὲν ἀρκεῖ τὸ ἐσθίειν κτλ. ἡμῖν δὲ . . . οὐκέτι ταῦτ' ἀπαρκεῖ, ἀλλ' ἂν μὴ κατὰ τρόπον κ. τεταγμένως κ. ἀκολουθῶς τῇ ἐκάστου φύσει κ. κατασκευῇ πράττωμεν οὐκέτι τοῦ τέλους τευξόμεθα τοῦ ἑαυτῶν. One to be eaten, another to help in tillage, another to give cheese,—such *their* duties. τὸν δ' ἄνθρωπον θεατὴν εἰσήγαγεν Αὐτοῦ τε κ. τῶν ἔργων . . . κ. οὐ μόνον θεατὴν ἀλλὰ κ. ἐξηγητὴν αὐτῶν. Διὰ τοῦτ' αἰσχρὸν ἐ. τῷ ἀνδρ. ἄρχεσθαι κ. καταλήγειν ὅπου κ. τὰ ἄλογα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἔνθεν μὲν ἄρχεσθαι καταλήγειν δ' ἐφ' ὃ κατέληξεν ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἢ φύσις. Κατέληξεν δ' ἐπὶ θεωρίαν κ. παρακολουθήσιν κ. σύμφωνον διεξαγωγὴν τῇ φύσει. Ὁρᾶτε οὖν μὴ ἀθέατοι τούτων ἀποθάνητε.

The animals have instinct and impulse, and do their allotted task without reflecting on their mission. Man does so reflect. His “differentia” (ἐξαιρέτον, 210) is not bare *χρήσις φαντασιῶν*, but *λογικὴ χρήσις*. And when Reason thus awakes to guide and hallow Instinct, what results? Nothing except the gradual abatement of Instinct, as in Buddha's system, the will-to-live is becalmed and neutralized. Man no more *acts*; he only *contemplates*. And this is his highest pleasure; and therefore his highest duty. For in the Stoic scheme (hedonist in all but name) there is no real distinction between wise pleasure and the aim of our being.

148, 9: Τοιαῦτ' ἐ. τὰ ἡμέτερα ὡς ἐν πανηγύρει· flocks to be sold, and men, some to sell, some to buy; ὀλίγοι δὲ τινες ἐ. οἱ κατὰ θεὰν ἐρχόμενοι τῆς πανηγύρεως,



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CHAPTER III

THE ULTIMATE PROBLEMS

(A) DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *Life, as profoundly moral and significant; death, as mere physical dissolution; a release not to friendly gods but to frigid elements; man, not a fellow-worker with God in any real sense, but a captive forced into the arena to make sport.*
- § 2. *Ambiguous phrases, "return to God"; Buddhism; resignation, a virtue of necessity.*
- § 3. *Man really excluded from both worlds, animal and divine; expediency (in face of the unknown) is the end, the sole motive; Virtue recognised neither in this world nor the next; Death welcome as the haven of all woes.*

§ 1. SUCH unscientific Science is closely akin to neurotic mysticism; and it is for this reason that both Epictetus and Aurelius regard with so little perturbation the "THANATISTIC" hypothesis.

The ultimate problem of death, as end of material and spiritual life, dissolution of body and extinction of character, is treated, as in Aurelius, in a *physical* and un-moral light. Life, so profoundly moral and devotional! death, so purely a matter of physical science, of the scalpel, the dissecting-room! It is curious to turn from the absorbed pietism and self-abandonment of his prayers to Zeus, "Thy will, not mine, be done," to

his chilling pedantry in the explanations of death. —104: Θάνατος τί ἐστὶ; μορμολύκειον· στρέψας αὐτὸ κατάμαθε· ἰδοῦ πῶς οὐ δάκνει! (a little reminiscence of Theocritus). Τὸ σωματίον δεῖ χωρισθῆναι τοῦ πνευματίου ὡς πρότερον ἐκεχώριστο, ἢ νῦν ἢ ὕστερον. Τί οὖν ἀγανακτεῖς εἰ νῦν; . . . ἵνα ἡ περίοδος ἀνύηται τοῦ Κόσμου· χρεῖαν γὰρ ἔχει τῶν μὲν ἐνισταμένων τῶν δὲ μελλόντων τῶν δ' ἠνυσμένων. So this child of God, this spectator and appraiser of the divine works, is, after all, in no way superior to an animal. Let us hear what Epicurus says after this discovery that the gods take no thought of men, and that at death the soul is extinguished. 179: Τί οὖν; οὐκ ἀρέσκει σοι ταῦτα; λάβε νῦν, πῶς ἡ δικαιοσύνη οὐδὲν ἐστὶ πῶς ἡ αἰδὼς μωρία ἐ. πῶς πατήρ οὐδὲν ἐ. πῶς ὁ υἱὸς οὐδὲν ἐ.— He will not practise this destructive theory; but logically it is complete and irrefutable. Epictetus' thin veil of pietism cannot abolish the fundamental inconsistency of the *religious* and the *scientific* view of the world. 244. The contrast, though painful, is almost comical: Ὅταν δὲ μὴ παρέχῃ τὰναγκαῖα, τὸ ἀνακλητικὸν σημαίνει, τὴν θυρὰν ἠνοιξεν κ. λέγει σοι Ἔρχου. So far so good; the personal and loving relation so conspicuous in the Cynic's life is not, then, to be cut short at death? Ποῦ; εἰς οὐδὲν δεινὸν ἀλλ' ὅθεν ἐγένου, εἰς τὰ φιλά κ. συγγενῆ—of course, to the gods? εἰς τὰ στοιχεῖα! We are amazed; is this all he has to tell us? Ὅσον ἦν ἐν σοι πυρὸς εἰς πῦρ ἄπεισιν, ὅσου ἦν γῆδιου εἰς γῆδιον, κτλ. Οὐδεὶς Ἀδης οὐδ' Ἀχέρων οὐδὲ Κωκυτὸς οὐδὲ Πυριφλεγέθων ἀλλὰ πάντα θεῶν μεστὰ κ. δαιμόνων. . . . “What if someone should come and slay me?” Μῶρε, σὲ οὐ ἀλλὰ τὸ σωματίον. Here the dualism is acknowledged, and the invulnerability of the true Ego almost

dogmatised. Like Acis, "To kindred gods his soul returns." The thought, however, is not further pursued in this passage, but seems taken up somewhat later. 266 : *Τὸ σωματίον δ' οὐδὲν πρὸς ἐμὲ· τὰ τούτου μέρη οὐδὲν πρὸς ἐμέ. Θάνατος; ἐρχέσθω ὅταν θέλη εἶθ' ὅλου εἴτε μέρους τινος. Φυγή; κ. ποῦ δύναται τις ἐκβαλεῖν ἔξω τοῦ Κόσμου; ὅπου δ' ἂν ἀπέλθω ἐκεῖ ἥλιος ἐκεῖ σελήνη ἐκεῖ ἄστρα ἐνύπνια οἰωνοὶ ἢ πρὸς θεοὺς ὀμιλία.* It will be noted that he here passes rapidly over death without an explanation; it is therefore *just* possible (but to me by no means probable) that he intends the assurance and comfort of the last sentence to extend also to the disembodied spirit.—He is on occasion very outspoken and straightforward on the unfeeling or unconscious cruelty or design of Law in dealing death; unsuccessfully with this mechanical automatism he attempts to combine the idea of a Creator and of Providence. 300, 301 : *Οἶον γὰρ ἐ. χειμῶν πρὸς σῦκον, τοιοῦτον ἐ. πᾶσα ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν Ὀλων περίστασις πρὸς τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν ἀναιρούμενα . . . ἀπώλειαν γὰρ σημαίνει τῶν σταχύων, ἀλλ' οὐ τοῦ Κόσμου. . . . Πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα τῶν προτέρων εἰσιν εἰς ἕτερα μεταβολαὶ, οὐκ ἀπώλεια, ἀλλὰ τεταγμένη τις οἰκονομία κ. διοίκησις. . . . Θάνατος, μεταβολὴ μείζων ἐκ τοῦ νῦν ὄντος, <οὐκ> εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ νῦν μὴ ὄν. "Οὐκέτι οὖν ἔσομαι;" οὐκ ἔσει. ἀλλ' ἄλλο τι οὐ νῦν ὁ Κόσμος χρεῖαν ἔχει. Καὶ γὰρ σὺ ἐγένου οὐχ ὅτε σὺ ἠθέλησας ἀλλ' ὅτε ὁ Κόσμος χρεῖαν ἔσχευ.* All the picturesque metaphors of Sons of God, athletes tried at Olympia, soldiers to whom a wise general sounds the recall,¹ break down utterly, confronted with such a pass-

¹ He is particularly fond of this simile; cf. 94 : *Ἐὰν δὲ σημήνη τῷ τὸ ἀνακλητικὸν ὡς τῷ Σωκράτει πείθεσθαι δεῖ τῷ σημαίνοντι ὡς στρατηγῷ.*



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the task of such interpretation. It is congenial solely to a Buddhist, in whose faith Nir-vâna is by no means universally defined as annihilation. Nay, is not Buddhism the most sympathetic and kindred system to the Porch? For it is free from the hypothesis of God, who is not merely superfluous, but whose exemption from all canons of ordinary morality or logic threatens the whole fabric of human duty and convention! We cannot get any further; we are compelled to leave the question in unsatisfactory suspense. The convinced dualist of the Hegemonic (the true "Inner Self") and the miserable envelope, when he comes to the supreme moment of the severance of Soul and Body, forgets the "deity within," the divine *ἀπόσπασμα*, and professes to be content with a purely *physical* explanation of the return of atoms or particles to their like. We have therefore Epictetus, like a vessel unballasted, rolling in a tremendous arc between two irreconcilable dogmas, each of which he believes so long as he is uttering it. "How dare you, insignificant part of the vast universe, complain? What matter to the sum of things which knows not decay, if your leg be broken?" *Σκέλος οὖν μοι γενέσθαι πεπηρωμένον; Ἀνδράποδον* (a favourite method of address) *εἶτα δι' ἐν σκελύδριον τῷ Κόσμῳ ἐγκαλεῖς; οὐκ ἐπιδώσεις αὐτὸ τοῖς Ὀλοῖς; οὐ χαίρων παραχωρήσεις τῷ δεδωκότι; ἀγανακτήσεις δὲ . . . τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ Διὸς διατεταγμένοις (ἃ ἐκεῖνος μετὰ τῶν Μοιρῶν παρουσῶν κ. ἐπικλωθουσῶν σου τὴν γένεσιν, ὥρισε κ. διέταξεν; οὐκ οἴσθα ἡλικὸν μέρος εἶ πρὸς τὰ Ὀλα; τοῦτο δὲ* (he adds or corrects), *κατὰ τὸ σῶμα, ὡς κατὰ γε τὸν λόγον οὐδὲ χείρων τῶν θεῶν οὐδὲ μικρότερος. λόγου γὰρ μέγεθος οὐ μήκει οὐδ' ὕψει κρίνεται ἀλλὰ δόγμασιν.* Here there is a faint inclination to the old Stoical

rivalry of the Sage with the gods; but it leads to nothing, and is not used to explain the presence of this curious power in the "frail earthen vessel." Yet how often does he make use of the appeal to "pietas," to the duty of cheerful submission as to an earthly father? emphasises not the *pettiness*, but the *dignity* of human nature? (47).

§ 3. Man is truly for him that indefinable and incomprehensible complex ζῶον λογικὸν θνητόν (128). He makes no serious attempt to correlate or coordinate these antitheses; and the individual who may not rank himself with the beasts finds in this negative and empty prerogative no admittance to the divine company. He is armed with a passport which excludes him from both worlds. So in the last resort, when the practical reason will have its say, the motive for resignation is neither fatal obedience to an absolute tyrant or cosmic law, nor willing concession to a loving Father,—but purely a matter of expediency, ἀλύπως ἀφόβως ἀταράχως, 145, 146).—Epictetus, confident of the answer, puts to his audience the query, Ἡμῖν οὖν λόγος ἐπὶ ἀτυχία κ. κακοδαιμονία δέδοται, ἵν' ἄθλιοι, ἵνα πενθοῦντες διατελώμεν; 288: yet what is the value of reason except, as in Marcus, to impress on us the conviction of decay, and to assure us of the vanity of striving; 371: ἅπαξ μαθὼν ὅτι τὸ γεγόμενον κ. φθαρῆναι δεῖ. In vain he assures us, "Man is not flesh, nor hair, but Will" (οὐ κρέας οὐ τρίχες ἀλλὰ προαίρεσις, 213), that the very nature of the supreme good is Will (91: οὐσία τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ προαίρεσις ποία): its sole duty is to remove us from earthly companions and simple pleasures, and to bestow in recompense the sad privilege of contemplating the mechanism of a uni-

verse which we can neither justify nor understand. It is in vain that the Cosmic Process is sometimes invested with the stern and inexorable attributes of a just Judge; *ὁ νόμος θεῖος κ. . . ἀναπόδραστος οὗτός ἐστι τὰς μεγίστας εἰσπρασσόμενος κολάσεις παρὰ τῶν τὰ μέγιστα ἁμαρτανόντων. . .* But in the end these Sinaitic fulminations vanish in the pure subjectivity of reward or penalty. There is no correspondence between the deserts of man and the measure of his recompense; and Virtue is in effect recognised neither in this world nor in the next, neither by gods nor men. What is the punishment of the renegade, the apostate, the runaway? Epictetus paints no Ajax defiant even in death, but a timorous Œdipus! *Ὁ ἀπειθῶν τῇ θεῖα διοικήσει ἔστω ταπεινὸς ἔστω δοῦλος λυπείσθω φθονεῖτω ἐλεείτω, τὸ κεφάλαιον πάντων, δυστυχεῖτω θρηνεῖτω.*—The tone of profound pessimism cannot be mistaken; Book iii. (p. 313) ends with the unmistakable words: *Ἐπὶ τοῦτον (death) οὖν μοι γυμνάζου, ἐνταῦθα νευέτωσαν οἱ λόγοι πάντες τὰ ἀσκήματα τὰ ἀναγνώσματα κ. εἴση οὕτω μόνως ἐλευθεροῦνται,* where the study of death is the vestibule, and death itself the gate of true liberty; cf. 318: *μίαν εἶναι μηχανὴν πρὸς ἐλευθερίαν τὸ εὐκόλως ἀποθνήσκειν* (a saying of Diogenes). 387. Death is the quiet haven of all our woes; *εἰ οὕτω τάλας εἰμὶ, λιμὴν τὸ ἀποθανεῖν. Οὗτος δ' ἐστὶ ὁ λιμὴν πάντων, ὁ Θάνατος, αὕτη ἡ καταφυγή.* . . *Ὅταν θέλῃς, ἐξῆλθες, κ. οὐ καπνίζῃ.* (Is your hearth smoking? you can leave the house!)—No wonder if to this last compliance of the Sage with a fateful ordinance he applies the word *θεῖος*; 127: *νοσοῦντα θείως, ἀποθνήσκοντα θείως.*



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of acquiescence is derived from the spectacle of Nature's violent contests and uncertainty :

“Natura autem hoc quod vides regnum mutationibus temperat; nubilo serena succedunt, . . . flant invicem venti, noctem dies sequitur; . . . *contrariis* rerum *Æternitas* constat. Ad hanc legem Animus noster aptandus est; . . . quæcumque fiunt debuisse fieri putet. . . . Hanc rerum conditionem mutare non possumus; id possumus, magnum sumere animum . . . quo fortiter fortuita patiamur et *Naturæ consentiamus* . . . optimum est pati quod emendare non possis, et Deum quo auctore cuncta proveniunt sine murmuratione comitari!”

§ 5. He is on occasion less of an Intellectualist than most Greek thinkers, and prefers, in his stress on practical life and happiness, a useful error to the glare of truth. 18 : *Εἰ ἄρ' ἐξαπατηθέντα ἔδει μαθεῖν* (= “the lie in the soul”) *ὅτι τῶν ἐκτὸς ἀπροαιρέτων οὐδὲν ἐ. πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἐγὼ μὲν ἤθελον τὴν ἀπάτην ταύτην ἐξ ἧς ἤμελλον εὐρόως κ. ἀταράχως βιώσασθαι ὑμεῖς δ' ὄψεσθ' αὐτοὶ τί θέλετε* and (β) finds the “differentia” of man to the animal world not in the epithet *νοερός* or *λογικός*, but in *moral* qualities; 89 : *Τίνι οὖν διαφέρει; . . . ὄρα μὴ τῷ παρακολουθεῖν οἷς ποιεῖ, ὄρα μὴ τῷ κοινωνικῷ, μὴ τῷ πιστῷ, τῷ αἰδήμονι, τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ, τῷ συνετῷ*; and it is this “differentia” that prescribes, as if by the finger of God, his function, and, therefore, his blessedness and end. *Ποῦ οὖν τὸ μέγα ἐν ἀνθρώποις κακὸν κ. ἀγαθὸν; ὅπου ἡ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΑ.*—He has much in common with Christian ideas as well as much that is wholly inadmissible: *Ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας* (134) *παρά γε τοῖς ὡς δεῖ . . . ἀπτομένοις αὐτῆς, συναίσθησις τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀσθενείας κ. ἀδυναμίας περὶ τὰναγκαῖα.* This sense of inner want, of unrest and sin, sends them to the Lecture Hall; and this discipline will at first increase their pain rather

than remove its cause. 285 : *ιατρῆιον ἐ. ἄνδρες, τὸ τοῦ φιλοσόφου σχολεῖον· οὐ δεῖ ἡσθέντας ἐξελθεῖν ἀλλ' ἀλγησάντας.*

§ 6. In one passage he distinctly seems to recognise in the middle of the purely physical *ἐκπύρωσις* or "Ragnarôk," a noëric life of God independent of his faithful counterpart, the visible universe (a passage recalling Dio Chrysostom's oration on the decay and renovation of the world),—"Zeus does not bewail himself or his loneliness: *Τάλας ἐγὼ οὔτε τὴν Ἥραν ἔχω οὔτε τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν οὔθ' . . . υἱὸν . . . ἢ συγγενῆ!*" For men judge him only by his beneficent functions, *ἀπὸ τοῦ φύσει κοινωνικοῦ εἶναι. Οὐδὲν ἥττον δεῖ τινα κ. πρὸς τοῦτο παρασκευὴν ἔχειν, τὸ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀρκεῖν, ἑαυτῷ συνεῖναι ὡς ὁ Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ σύνεστιν, κ. ἡσυχάζει ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ κ. ἐννοεῖ τὴν διοίκησιν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ οἷα ἐ. κ. ἐν ἐπινοίαις γίνεται πρεπούσαις ἑαυτῷ.*—Here is a dim trace of Aristotelian influence, with which school, as the most sober and Hellenic in classical times, the Porch, Oriental, and pessimistic, had least in common, and was always at feud.

§ 7. He recognises yet circumscribes the *external* benefits of Cæsarism in a striking passage. 243 : *Ὁρᾶτε γὰρ ὅτι εἰρήνην μεγάλην ὁ Καῖσαρ ἡμῖν δοκεῖ παρέχειν ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν οὐκέτι πόλεμοι οὐδὲ μαχαὶ οὐδὲ ληστήρια μεγάλα οὐδὲ πειρατικά· ἀλλ' ἔξεστιν πάση ὥρᾳ ὀδεύειν, πλεῖν ἀπ' ἀνατολῶν ἐπὶ δυσμάς.* But can he save you from fever, shipwreck, earthquake, lightning? From love, grief, envy? No, in this alone can philosophy give exemption, and provide a safe prophylactic; ensuring an inward peace, *ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κεκηρυγμένην διὰ τοῦ λόγου.* And as he would have rejected any

modern scheme of elevating the masses by change of environment, as he surrendered over the whole world of things and chattels to the strong hand without criticism or expostulation, their proper lords and masters (*ἐκείνων κύριος*), so he would discountenance the Reform movement which at one time saw salvation in the multiplied vote. 319: *Ὁ δούλος εὐθὺς εὐχεται ἀφεθῆναι ἐλεύθερος . . . “Ἄν ἀφεθῶ” φησιν, “εὐθὺς πᾶσα εὐροια, οὐδένομος ἐπιστρέφομαι, πᾶσιν ὡς ἴσος κ. ὅμοιος λαλῶ, πορεύομαι ὅπου θέλω, ἔρχομαι ὅταν θέλω.”* Then comes the disillusionment, as the “white slaves” of England, or the emancipated serf in Russia. *Εἶτα ἀπηλευθέρωται κ. εὐθὺς μὲν οὐκ ἔχων ποῖ φάγη ζητεῖ τίνα κολακείαν κ. πάσχει τὰ δεινότατα· ἐμπέπτωκεν εἰς δουλειάν πολὺ τῆς προτέρας χαλεπωτέραν*: the whole long passage is interesting and significant.

(C) HARMONY BETWEEN EPICTETUS AND MARCUS AURELIUS

§ 8. If we have fully mastered the secret maxims or the open counsels of Epictetus, we have already in anticipation understood Marcus Aurelius. They distinctly stand in the relation of master and pupil; and the slave has taught the “purple-born” the solitary pathway to Indifference. All the special dogmas agree, as well as the main points: the distinction of “mine and not mine,” the unity of the Greater Commonwealth, and the duty of submission. From Epictetus, Marcus will borrow his constant query, “Who is there to prevent you?” (*τίς μ’ ἀναγκάσει*; 78); his belief in natural tendency of all men to the good, 217; the plea for specific knowledge and analysis of particulars, 200;



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PART III. THE CREED OF MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

CHAPTER I

THE TEACHING OF THE EMPEROR ; THE NATURE OF MAN THE AGENT

(A) CHIEF CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS MEDITATIONS DUE TO HIS OFFICE AND HIS TIME

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *Troubled period of history ; melancholy tone.*
- § 2. *Such temper the natural result of complex and well-equipped civilization.*
- § 3. *Deadening effect of order and security under Flavian and Antonines (70-180); straitened outlook; relief in Mysticism.*
- § 4. *Dulness of Socialist routine ; sadness of Aurelius ; his Ascetic dualism.*
- § 5. *No genuine interest in the world ; his writings, a private stimulant to his own flagging faith.*
- § 6. *Earnest yet Sceptical tone ; his supreme duty, not to God, the world, or society, but to himself.*

§ 1. NOTHING can well be more interesting to the ordinary mind than the meditations of a king. We may expect from them the result of a ripe, a complex,

a unique experience, as of one who has mounted to the summit of the hill, and, embracing all the sides of the landscape below in which we severally play our less conspicuous part, can look beyond in a wider survey on the nature of things and the future destiny of man and the race. Yet the meditations of kings are by no means frequent, and their verdict on life and experience is universally sad. Exceptional opportunities of comprehensive view seem never to result in buoyancy or cheerfulness. The sense of "having achieved," of monotonous enjoyment of stationary dignity, the circumscription of the regal power of doing good, the hollowness of court life, combine to produce a peculiar temper of mind—apathetic, tolerant, and cynical and ironic. So true is it that all pleasure lies in process, in gradually drawing nearer a never-realised goal or ideal; for in the moment of attainment satisfaction dies. The Book of Ecclesiastes may surely represent, if not the exact words, at least the traditional attitude of King Solomon. We may, indeed, detect in it the effect of that Oriental sadness conspicuous in most Greek philosophers, which forms so striking a contrast to the sober yet abiding optimism of the Jewish character. But there is nothing improbable in the tone, dispirited and disillusioned, which marks off this from all other Canonic Scripture. It is entirely suitable to a peaceful and opulent monarch who has never been braced by war or other emergency. Ennui and lassitude follow of necessity the certain fruition of good things; and Leopardi is profoundly true when he depicts Zeus sending disease and misfortune to men, not to make life more painful, but that they might be reconciled to it through hope, anxiety, suspense, and change. In such times of peace the

reign of Marcus Aurelius, our "philosopher-king," certainly did not fall. The realm of Nature, with earthquakes, famines, pestilences, allied with the Danubian barbarians to disquiet the land. The Parthian war, in which his colleague Verus took an unworthy part, was an almost annual pageant or tournament of the Romans, like much of our traditional feud with France; neither combatant was serious. But the Quadi might well seem to Aurelius to be in deadly earnest. Tacitus had believed that Rome had no hope unless she could keep these tribes quarrelling internally in a purposeless animosity, which should avert their covetous eyes from the treasure-house of civilization! The Emperor could not have been ignorant either of the fears of the historian or of the real menace of these untamed tribes. Yet, though his time is amply filled with all that complex public service of the State now centred on the shoulders of one man, with benefactions, orphanages, foundling hospitals, and campaigns, there is the same profound melancholy in the busy sovereign that we detect in the satiety of Solomon. Gibbon believes in the extreme felicity of the Antoninian age; but, while we have instruments for testing and registering human sensitiveness to pain, we have none so delicate as to chronicle the excess or defect of happiness.

§ 2. What is to be our criterion? Certainly not outward prosperity, or even advance of culture, sanitation, comfort, letters. Who nowadays supposes that the Italian peasant is happier (whatever we may mean by that figurative and elusive term) under the new regimen than in the careless squalor, the light-hearted ease, of the days before unification? It is the slave who has a native minstrelsy, not the citizen. Blithesome



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and conceded, we lack all those signal instances of successful merit which roused our admiration in the earlier days of Christendom. There is no actual bar to such ascent to power and responsibility; but the approach must be less rapid, more measured and continuous, and at the end of a prosperous family career the third in descent may look forward to the dignified retirement of the House of Commons. A standard of mediocre attainment has superseded the exceptional brilliance of some favoured and infrequent individual. The nation gains, and is all the more secure for this curtailment of possibilities; but the interest of life dwindles, and the classes, in spite of some show of social intermixture, remain at core impenetrable and unsympathetic. The "General Post" and topsy-turvydom anticipated by the political reformers of the nineteenth century has by no means been verified.

§ 3. Now, the Roman Empire, in spite of the plutocratic basis of society and taxation, was far more democratic in its temper and its possibility than we shall see Europe in our lifetime. The highest post in the State was open to anyone; but the entire policy of the successors of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, first the Flavian dynasty, next the Antonines, had to eliminate this awful risk of the "man of talent," the "man of the hour," by a steady and uniform succession of adopted heirs.¹ Did this regularity rob life of its zest, while it

¹ Diocletian found himself obliged to repeat this practice after the turmoil of half a century, without in theory abandoning the principle that the supreme office, the bâton of the Empire, was in every soldier's haversack; hence the anomaly of a hereditary dynasty which yet excited no passionate loyalty. For the ideal was still republican, impersonal, abstract; whereas to-day our interest frankly centres round our First Family, by right of immemorial lineage.

cleared it of the danger of excited competitors? The literature of the second century is just everything except civic or political. It is much like our own, though so incomparably scantier—the same keen curiosity for the occult, the personal, the romantic, the religious, the satirical; and behind this frivolous foreground the silent, patient, inexorable work of the Roman legists, who were folding the coils of custom, prescription, routine, round the limbs of a tired world,—a world which would one day wake up and remonstrate. In this most freely organized community, or group of equal States, the deadening effects of order and security were found at work. Decay and dwindling of the population, lack of interest in civic concerns, and, with a straitened outlook, hereditary caste of noble or official or soldier—all agreeable to the present safety, but adverse to the future welfare of an imperial people. The horizon, once boundless and full of mystery, became fixed and crystalline; just as in cosmic life the “infinite universes” of Ionia, born and destroyed in “infinite time,” were replaced by the well-ascertained frontiers and modest extent of Aristotelian (and therefore all mediæval) cosmogony. The impulse towards Christianity was by no means universally a longing for moral regeneration, but in great part the desire of a fresh domain, “new worlds to conquer.” We see this clearly in the speculative eagerness of the Gnostics, multiplication of the Basilidian heavens, the increased zest of esoteric mysteries,—all coupled with indifference to conduct.

§ 4. So far as a worldly power can, the Empire satisfied its children, giving them order, sustenance, and amusement; but it could not protect them from the dulness and satiety of Socialism, or from the mis-

chievous effects of its own gifts, its own over-conscientious vigilance.¹ To the Sovereign this sense of weariness and fatigue came more acutely than to others. He stood alone (as he tells us himself) in the midst of men with whom he had nothing in common. Let us at least hope they had some satisfaction even on a lower scale; for it is clear that their master possessed the unfortunate faculty of taking his chief delight in melancholy. We know not which is the predominant note of his "meditations," a constant appeal to bear the inevitable with patience, nay, even with devout resignation; or a contemptuous vilification of the material, the details, the occupations, the pleasures of human life. While he protests that the universe is a single whole, animated in all its parts by the same spirit of life and order and permanence through change, no Gnostic or Christian ascetic can exceed the harshness of the language for the poor inoffensive framework which encircled and (as he felt it) imprisoned his "Vital Spark of Heavenly Flame." In order to keep himself free from any suspicion of attachment to the flesh, he seeks to excite his own disgust with the foulness of human reproduction, the vanity and nothingness of human life. The Stoic School, while professing materialism and sensualism (in its theoretic sense), is gradually veering round to a complete Platonic Dualism, of the visible substrate and the unseen spiritual energy. While avowing adhesion to the formula, "man a

¹ The invaders rebelled against this childish tutelage, while respecting the outward forms; and this will explain the curious anomaly of the Middle Ages, which show the profoundest reverence for ideals, of Church, of Empire, of Christendom, never restraining for a moment the passionate and lawless egoism of everyday life,—the most absolute divorce of practice and theory.



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He writes his "meditations or commentaries" to himself to comfort his soul in the stress of doubt, to remind it that Ethics are independent of metaphysic; that whatever the constitution of the Universe,—one, manifold or chance, the likelihood of survival or dissipation, the careful guidance or neglect of the gods, the ingratitude of our fellow-men,—one course alone remained open to him, to follow right at all costs and all hazards, from a duty owed partly indeed to the Inscrutable Cause of all, but mainly to himself and that conscience of Duty and of work which he loves to call the "Deity within."

§ 6. Two very interesting points emerge, then, from this earnest yet sceptical tendency; first, that in spite of its threatened dissolution it is his own personality that really concerns him, a self-absorbed introspective brooding on the "Way of Salvation," to which those "social" acts (*κοινωνικαὶ πράξεις*) appeal, not from love of one's neighbour, but from a stern duty to one's higher self; and next, that from the blank and dumb fatalism of objective Nature (where Stoics sought God in a physical power), the soul of man was repelled, and forced into seeking for himself a nearer and a more propitious deity. In Stoicism proper we have a cold and "scientific theology," which in essence differs not from materialism; in Aurelius we have Logic and Emotion, Pure Reason and Faith, contesting for the mastery in a bosom agonizing with conflict of doubts and hopes. In Platonism we mark reaction to a doctrine, which though highly scientific in outline, is intensely emotional in essence. Briefly, Stoic Positivism; then Marcus' incongruous (yet so sincere!) admixture of science and faith; next, the pure subjective certainty

of Platonism, where the "Desire of Mankind" is found in no outer communicable system, fortified by logic and preserved by iterated maxims,—but within the soul itself, secure and permanent, in everlasting companionship.

We have in the foregoing brief introduction to a detailed inquiry into Aurelius' tenets, maintained that the peculiar tone of melancholy pervading the volume is to be expected from a "philosopher king," above all, from a reflecting Roman Cæsar in that epoch of lethargy. We have seen how nearly the circumstances of his time correspond to our own; and how little the removal of political disabilities or the assurance of a competence can reconcile men to a life which, delivered indeed from anxiety, is also robbed of all hope. We have ascertained that in the peculiar system to which he attached himself in common with all earnest Romans, there was no satisfaction for a pious and an affectionate nature; and there is left for us (after hinting at the considerable step which the Emperor took in the direction of Platonism) to examine closely his often inconsistent views on man's nature, or the human soul, the human personality. For this is the real starting-point of all the subjective schools.¹

¹ We may here insert as an illustration of modern Stoicism the following remarks of Mr. Norman Pearson (*Nineteenth Century*, May 1895), which already to us sound strangely confused and archaic:

"Science accepts . . . that man belongs to a system of existence which is inspired to struggle upwards by a power which makes for righteousness." "His relations to such a power would be outraged by petitions for the disturbance of this order." "To man, as the last and highest product of this scheme, its due progress seems to be specially committed; consequently, conduct which impedes his own struggle upward, is not only an offence against his own highest interests, but is a Sin against the order of the Universe. . . . *Feeling* will in due course

(B) INFLUENCE OF THE CONCEPTION OF Λόγος
ON GREEK THOUGHT

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *Personal need the starting-point of practical philosophy; λόγος=principle of order and consistency, gradually personified.*
- § 2. *Incurable "teleology" of the Classical period; φύσις and λόγος become interchangeable terms (at least, inseparable correlates).*
- § 3. *In progress of Stoicism, λόγος tends to become detached and transcendent; frank adoption of strict Platonic dualism; Manichæan atmosphere.*
- § 4. *For this dualism, Gnostics had some fanciful explanation; Stoics none; Aurelius only kept by his busy life and Roman training from complete surrender of the actual.*

§ 1. All philosophy, all science, springs from the desire to accommodate and explain the world to the self. A purely disinterested search for Truth has probably "never entered into the heart of man." The joy of knowledge and discovery, the control of natural forces, or the necessity of satisfying the deeper needs of the heart,—such are the motives which impelled Hellenic speculation. It is in the main purely personal or subjective; and of no school is this more true than of Aristotle's successors. All Greek thought is an attempt to find the Λόγος in things, in words, in the State, in man's soul and life. With an almost endless

follow in the footsteps of *Thought*; and the prayer of the future will be attuned to those higher conceptions which religious thought has already reached. Not less reverent, though more robust than the prayer of to-day, it will embody the religious aspiration of man,—trained, indeed, to a truer apprehension of Nature and Nature's God, but freed from the trammels of theological dogma and priestly mediation; and though it may draw man away from the altar, it will lead him nearer to the throne!"



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perhaps term the incurable or *invincible teleology* of the Greeks. So we get to the *limited* universe of Aristotle; and to the unshaken conviction that everything created had a purpose and a meaning; and that the secret of its happiness or satisfaction lay in discovering the cause and the object of its being, and in "doing its duty."

We may pause a moment to wonder at the admirable simplicity of mind which tolerated this fundamental assumption. Every colloquy with a Sceptic or a Sophist was ended in favour of the Rationalist,—so soon as he had secured the admission that Nature had an end, each thing an ἔργον, or—in the most popular form of the thought—that ἡ φύσις οὐδὲν μάτην ποιεῖ. This Nature or this Λόγος were interchangeable terms; and while the former retained all that notion of spontaneous energy and beneficent creativeness which Aristotle gave it, the latter, as we have seen, was from a cloudy or logical abstraction gradually assuming the lineaments of a Personal Intelligence.¹

§ 3. The Stoics, starting from complete materialism, recognised but a single Principle; but the ineradicable dualism of intelligence sets itself, and that which it feels akin and cognate to itself, in violent contrast to the unconscious and formless substrate. The Λόγος of the world tends more and more to detach itself from its works, and from being *immanent* and implicit in things to become *transcendent*. It is doubtful if any system that has enjoyed a vogue, has ever been strictly and severely

¹ We need feel no surprise, then, if we find this Λόγος takes the familiar garb of Olympian Zeus in the Syncretism prevalent throughout the Imperial Age; is, on the other hand, identified with that rational Principle, after whose original exemplar the World-Soul fashions her material in complete docility.

Monistic. The common consciousness assures us, with the early Pythagorean systœchy, or groups of opposites, that things are in pairs; and we may say with considerable truth, that "most modern thought, and all modern endeavour, rest on a Dualistic hypothesis." Stoicism, imported into Roman territory, adopted frankly the opposition of matter and spirit, in a word, Platonism; and the nature of man suffered a like schism, for which the unnatural or theatrical austerities of the earlier heroes have already prepared us. When we read Seneca or Epictetus or Aurelius, we feel we are in a Manichæan atmosphere. The aim of the individual *Λόγος* is to unite itself (not, indeed, too hastily or with undue impatience) to the universal *Λόγος*: exterior nature, with its blunt carelessness of our wishes or deserts, seems to be too dangerous ground for us to repose on; we must abandon it, though still murmuring the commonplaces of its divine order and arrangement. For our own physical frame no language of contempt was too exaggerated; and, like some love-sick mediæval saint, the Stoic recluse sighed for deliverance, while he pronounced this world perfect and unique, with no ulterior object save ceaseless repetition. The query of the French dramatist, "Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?" arises to our lips, without deliberate irreverence, as applicable, not merely to this incompetent imprisoned ray of Universal Reason, which had somehow fallen into the snares of matter, but also to the Parent of all such imperfect emanations. It retreats further and further from things, and abandons the course of the secular series to itself.

§ 4. Now the Gnostics, be it remarked in passing, had at least a logical and consistent, though fantastic answer

to this problem of the intermixture of mind and matter. But the Stoics could admit no such explanations to solve the difficulty. Their instinct (like all humanity, dualistic) was at variance with their reasoned philosophy, which pronounced things good, and descending from a single "Source of Life." Hand in hand the Sage and his Divine Counterpart or Original retreated from an alien world, without in theory abandoning any of the tenets or axioms of the profoundest optimism and content. Man was made for a purpose; but precisely what, it was impossible to discover; and while the stout Roman character of Aurelius and the exigencies of his busy and responsible position keep him still faithful to the social instinct, and prevent the final plunge, yet there are not wanting symptoms of that somewhat morbid mysticism, which elevates as the supreme goal of the rational being the overcoming of its "otherness" in unconscious ecstasy, reunion with Universal Reason.

(C) THE CONSTITUTION AND PSYCHOLOGY OF THE
INDIVIDUAL

ANALYSIS

- § 5. *In Stoic world, everything necessary and perfect, each in its several place; you may neither complain nor hate nor reform.*
- § 6. *Only in Man may service be voluntary as well as compulsory; man's "freedom"; he owes this (doubtful) blessing to his share in λόγος; yet in no true sense is he critic or agent.*
- § 7. *Aurelius has no sympathy with Matter, no account of the relation of Soul and Body; sole interest in Spiritual part.*
- § 8. *Problem of Psychology; how many divisions in soul? (increas-*



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the seeming conflict of ultimate principles as a mere passing phase, which gathers up and embraces the turmoil and contrast of a lower sphere in the peace and silence of the Absolute. If to complain of such a world is impiety, so, too, is it to attempt to alter or reform it. As there is no questioning of the ways and methods of Providence, so the very notion of change, improvement, progress is altogether eliminated. Each thing is in its place; its character and circumstances are all divinely appointed by that Power which may either, once and for all, have settled on the course of events, and written out in anticipation the whole book of destiny,—or with careful and particular solicitude may be even now guiding every trivial detail of the world's course;—Marcus will not venture to decide which of these views is correct.

§ 6. But clearly in *man's special conformation* there is something exceptional and peculiar. The rest of the creatures form an orderly but unconscious retinue in the train of the King. Their service is perfect indeed, but involuntary and automatic. With man enters a new factor: that almost invisible point of Freedom, which at once tells of his close affinity to the Universal Intelligence, and also permits him to criticize it. The impulse to philosophic thought is curiously interwoven of the passionate desire to be free and the correlative yearning to discover and obey the Highest Law; and all searchers after truth are like Saint Christopher. Man has this double power; first, of valuing and admiring the works of Creation, all the Stoics placing the precarious paradise of immortal heroes in closer contemplation of the mysteries of stars and their orbits; second, of determining himself freely and without reserve, in the very limited realm of Liberty

still left to him in the universal dominion of physical law. This very doubtful privilege he owes to his participation in the *Λόγος*: indeed, the conscious spectator of the world, the deliberate moral agent, may represent but the waking vision of a Somnambulist Creator. Is Reason, is the will-to-live, startled and amazed when, reaching consciousness in man, it beholds the universe which its blind and undirected efforts have called into being? This is clearly a modern and romantic belief, which we should not try and discover in the system of Aurelius; but we may mention it here, to show how assailable, how open to logical attack, is his doctrine on human nature. Critic, he is forbidden to speak; agent, he is restricted by ascetic "taboo" from finding enjoyment even in the innocent diversions of life, and confined in a narrow prison-house of "non-possumus." His nature is conceived as abrupt dualism; his ethics is limited to passivity and resignation.

§ 7. An English bishop and Christian apologist has pronounced our body to be a "mass of matter with which we are for a time associated"; and most Idealists would relegate it, with all its pleasures and pains, to the dim phantom-region of the external world, neither more nor less cognate to us, nor more nor less approaching true being; emphatically like it, a Thing. The same sense of "foreignness" may be found in Marcus, who is far more an idealist than any predecessor in the Stoic School; who, as we have seen, has not yet reached that genial Platonism which reconciles the two opposing factors; has no knowledge of the Christian faith which somehow can consecrate the lower element while keeping it in proper subordination. He exhausts on this innocent envelope of the striving

spirit all the vocabulary of sarcasm, innuendo, contempt; he might well be Saint Thomas à Kempis. We may here repeat what was said under a similar heading in Epictetus, that no Gnostic, no early Christian ascetic, could write more severely; and we shall substantiate this by a fuller examination. For he never accurately defines matter, or enters into the difficult problem of the interaction of soul and body; we must therefore pass to the unseen or spiritual part of man, if we wish to find his function and his "differentia."

§ 8. Now here we are met by a considerable difficulty, for Marcus makes not the slightest effort to be consistent. Sometimes the invisible and truer portion of man is twofold, as with us, "body and soul"; at others, it is, like our "body, soul, and spirit," threefold. Now we find soul (*ψυχή*) violently opposed to the higher principle, as the vital element of mere animal life; now it includes it, or is even identical. Now it is true that we are perfectly familiar with this looseness; for it is only on occasion that we find in Scripture the triple definition; and generally and in common parlance we are quite satisfied with the popular dualism. But in a system avowedly monistic, we are puzzled when we meet with this increasing tendency to multiply difference and accentuate, rather than reconcile, contrasts. But it is not without significance; our honest and sincere student of human nature cannot really find satisfaction himself in the Unitarian tenets he professes. Our modern society and hopes of progress rest upon a sense of "otherness" and conflict, and not upon any fatigued or impatient assumption of oneness. In iii. 16 we find *σῶμα, ψυχή, νοῦς· σώματος αἰσθήσεις, - ψυχῆς ὄρμαι, νοῦ δόγματα*, sensations, impulses, principles.



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referring to the higher Universal Reason, in the "Averroistic" usage, into which man has indeed an inlet; but can lose such access by sensuality. Clearly, too, he believes that the Spirit (for so I may perhaps translate *ἡγεμ.*) can be so immersed and engrossed in fleshly cares, as to lose its liberty; unlike the Gnostics, to whom even in physical crime and degradation the untarnished *Noûs* remains always pure;—"ἡ γλῶσσ' ὁμόμοχ' ἡ δὲ φρήν ἀνώμοτος." Yet in viii. 41, when showing the various "hindrances we meet," of *αἴσθησις* in body, of *ὄρμη* in animal appetite, he continues: *τὰ μέντοι τοῦ νοῦ ἴδια οὐδεὶς ἄλλος εἴωθεν ἐμποδίζειν* for this nothing in the world can touch, not fire, not steel, not tyrant, not ill-fame.

§ 10. But just in this there is no real divergence, for it is the *voluntary* servitude of the Spirit which can disgrace it, when it becomes the mere handmaid of body in long-sighted Hedonism; it is proof against any assault from without, and becomes the victim only of itself. One of Marcus' most striking and often iterated convictions is that at any moment, whatever its past, Spirit can recover "in the turning of an oyster-shell," "in the twinkling of an eye," this lost sovereignty. The will is always free, and requires only to see the good to follow it. Thus we have the Socratic and Platonic optimism and immediacy of repentance; without Aristotle's caution, truer to nature and experience, about habit and the tyranny of custom, the gradual absorption of will-power in repeated action. When freed by its own unaided efforts, Spirit has an immeasurable power; it completely transforms the whole world, and colours it with its own hues. What it *thinks, is*; "not *things*, but *thoughts* on things" really matter (teaching alike of

Epicurus and Epictetus).¹ For all the objective is neutral, an array of indifferent atoms or complex phenomena which wait for our notice, approval, interpretation, dissent, before they have any character in themselves at all. *τοῦτο μὴ ὑπολαμβάνετω κ. πάντα εὖ ἔχει* (see on 'Υπόληψις). Now it is Spirit that ὑπολαμβάνει, passes judgment, gives verdict on this unreal phantom, this almost imaginary objective, a mirage in the desert. "If the poor body" (always the diminutive, iv. 39) "be cut or burned, fester or rot away, yet let that in thee which passes judgment take its ease (*ἡσυχαζέτω*), knowing this, that what happens alike to good and bad men equally can be in itself neither bad nor good." Similarly vi. 8: *Το Ἡγεμονικὸν ἐ. τὸ ἑαυτὸ ἐγείρον κ. τρέπον, κ. ποιοῦν μὲν ἑαυτὸ οἶον ἂν εἶναι θέλη, ποιοῦν δ' ἑαυτῷ φαίνεσθαι πᾶν τὸ συμβαῖνον, οἶον αὐτὸ θέλει.* It can make of itself what it wishes; it can construe exactly according to its desire this neutral, or even chaotic and indecipherable, complex of material things. This is the pure subjectivity to which Philosophy always aspires; not to change things without; not even, perhaps, to claim full knowledge (the "ding-an-sich" live apart inaccessible, and baffle our search); but to make things ours, to arrange the chance alphabet into a language of our own invention. This is true freedom, and it is the substance and sum of Stoic teaching, from its *personal* side.

§ 11. Now it will be seen at once that, besides

¹ Compare, *e.g.*, Epictetus, i. 11: *Τί δ' ἐστὶ τοῦτο; ἀρά γε ἄλλο ἢ ὅτι ἔδοξεν ἡμῖν;* where it is the *δόγμα* we form in fullest freedom, that *is*; as absolutely *representing*, even *creating*, the external fact, which in itself is blind and voiceless; so ii. 16 (p. 155, Teubner): *Τί οὖν με παράσσει; τὸ πέλαγος; οὐ ἀλλὰ τὸ δόγμα.*

the variation of nomenclature, there are certain grave difficulties; (a) there must be as many various, yet equally momentous and valid, interpretations of the world as there are Spirits (“quot homines tot sententiæ”), and we have almost got back in the most dogmatic of ancient schools to the sophistic standpoint that ἄνθρωπος (each individual man) μέτρον ἀπάντων; and this recognition that subjective feeling, though real and true, is incommunicable, may account for the singularly scanty influence of Stoicism in public; (b) again (as we have already hinted), is this Spirit, as Epictetus and Aurelius so often assure, a “very portion of God, a refraction of the Universal Mind,” in which case, how can it be our “very own”? (σὸν, § 8, *fin.*). Will it not, like the Gnostic Æon Christ, like the Averroistic Noûs, in the moment of death desert the poor contemptible clay and soul, and be re-absorbed in the great central Reservoir? If it is the universal (mathematical and logical) principles of all sound judgment and right reasoning, must it not be exactly alike and identical in all men? In fact, we have here one of the most striking features of this transition period, viz. the passage from an *intellectual* to a *moral* conception of the Spirit. The Spirit (whether νοûs or, as Aurelius prefers, ἡγεμονικόν) is not the cold *speculative* reason, with its uniform and universally valid axioms and regulations, but the *moral* sense recognising, indeed, pure truth and the δόγματα, and needing logical training, but in the end, the conscience, the will, the moral personality, the special idiosyncratic in man, rather than that “typical” reason which is the same in all. Thus Marcus, along with the Christian teachers, becomes more moral, more personal,



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§ 13. In vi. 32 we find that the higher nature is all included in the term *ψυχή*. *Ἐκ σωματίου εἰμι κ. ψυχῆς*; but to the one all are indifferent (*ἀδιάφορα*), to the other all that are not its own proper functions (*τῇ δὲ διανοίᾳ ἀδ. ὅσα μὴ ἐ. αὐτῆς ἐνεργήματα*); and these are entirely in its power (*πάντα ἐπ' αὐτῇ*). Here *διάνοια* = *ψυχή*; while in vi. 14 *ψυχή*, with the addition *λογικῆ*, represents spirit, and *ὁ ψυχὴν λογικὴν, καθολικὴν κ. πολιτικὴν τιμῶν* cares nothing for any other interest. Again, ix. 3, we have the popular dualism; expect the hour, *ἐν ᾗ τὸ ψυχαρίον σου τοῦ ἐλύτρου ἐκπεσεῖται*. Similarly and in a similar context, on a peaceful departure from life, *εὐκόλως τὸ ψυχαρίον ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος ἐξειλεῖται*. Again, *ψυχή* is identified with the higher nature (Rendall's Inner Self), vii. 16, *τὸ Ἡγεμονικὸν αὐτὸ ἐαυτῷ οὐκ ἐνοχλεῖ . . . τὸ δὲ ψυχαρίον . . . οὐδὲν μὴ πάθη*, where they are homonyms; whereas in ix. 36, *τὸ πνευματίον (? -κόν)* (like all other things unreal and transitory), *ἄλλο τοιοῦτον, ἐκ τούτων εἰς ταῦτα μετάβαλλον*, where it may very well = the vital current, vivifying now one now another complex of matter.

§ 14. We have added these passages, but with little hope of making the Psychology of Marcus clearer. Syncretist as he is, he adopts first one and then another system of bipartite or tripartite division. When he is speaking of the whole human complex, he terms it, after immemorial fashion, "body and soul"; when he is occupied with man's invisible life, he has to define more guardedly. Indeed, there is not wanting trace of an "Ego" above the vital centre of animal life, apart from the deity within, which like some attendant on a sacred shrine (*νεώκορος*) has to keep the silver image

unsullied, forming thus a fourth element in the individual. But it would be easy to parallel the slight confusion in any religious writer. Is the moral ideal, separable from the will and the personality, conceived as a sort of Divine "deposit" (*παρακαταθήκη*) to be carefully guarded? or the very man himself, *ἔχων πῶς*? or the voice of an inward *dæmon* or spiritual monitor? He who can discriminate the intricate subtleties of such a question will be able to settle the Mediæval problem whether God *created* or *obeyed* the Moral Law; and the still older but similar question in Plato, whether the Ideas pre-exist, and form the exemplar to the artizan Deity, or are to be identified with his thoughts. The difficulty is perhaps after all purely formal and logical.

(D) MAN'S FUNCTION AND PLACE IN THE WORLD:
SPECIAL EQUIPMENT OF EACH BEING A KEY TO
ITS PURPOSE AND HAPPINESS

ANALYSIS

§ 15. *His a priori teleology; what is man made for? "Social intercourse."*

§ 16. *"Reasonable beings made for each other" (list of axioms or "dogmas" kept ready for crisis or temptation).*

§ 17. *"Mutual service of men" (enshrined in rigid formula; individualism excluded); what is good for whole is good for part.*

§ 15. We have now to inquire what is the *function* of this curious creature, compounded of an actual particle of the divine essence, and of the vital force and dust of earth, common to all animals. And here we come to the most ingenuous assumption of the whole

treatise. No wonder Marcus had to have perpetual recourse to the *δόγματα*, those fundamental and yet startling axioms of the Stoic faith which alone could encourage him in the disappointments and vicissitudes of life. "Man is made for society." Again and again with almost tedious repetition he, in his solitude and isolation, both of station and of temperament, impresses this axiom on himself. To bring together here the passages bearing on this teleology¹ may not be out of place, as they build up the syllogistic fabric; "Everything has an *end*; that for which he is born is the

¹ It is the same kind of teleology which anticipates all experience with the barren formula and syllogism: "Nature can do nothing in vain, nothing wrong," "the gods could not do any injury to their creatures." There is an absolute and exasperating want of empirical verification: there is no real inductive inquiry at all. Every avenue to accurate knowledge, as to any comfortable use and adaptation of phenomena, is closed by some preconceived idea as to the goodness of God and Nature. It is clear that the attitude of "devout resignation" in Marcus and in Epictetus is entirely borrowed from popular religiosity (like the compassionateness of Secularists to-day, which is so admirable and so unreasoning). To the man racked unjustly, with every refinement of torture, and dying as he knows the death of a dog, extinguished for ever, the universe is yet "the best of all possible worlds," and Providence supreme. In such contexts and usages words cease to have any meaning. For a fine instance of this superb adherence to teleologic axioms, commend me to ii. 11, where the subject is suicide and death: *ὁ δὲ χεῖρω μὴ ποιεῖ ἀνθρώπον πῶς ἂν τοῦτο βίον ἀνθρώπου χεῖρω ποιήσειεν; Οὔτε δὲ κατ' ἀγνοίαν οὔτ' εἰδυῖα μὲν μὴ δυναμένη δὲ προφυλάξασθαι ἢ διορθώσασθαι ταῦτα, ἢ τῶν Ὀλων Φύσις παρεῖδεν ἂν· οὔτ' ἂν τηλικούτον ἤμαρτεν ἦτοι παρ' ἀδυναμίαν ἢ παρ' ἀτεχνίαν ἵνα τὰ τ' ἀγαθὰ κ. κακὰ ἐπίσης τοῖς τ' ἀγ. ἀνθρ. κ. τοῖς κακοῖς πεφυρμένως συμβαίη.* "Nature could not" (such is his magnificent and amazing faith), either through lack of power or lack of skill, have made such a blunder as to let good and evil indifferently befall the good and bad indiscriminately." An almighty power which can do no wrong, and which abides in our soul, and governs the universe! Why then this sense of pain and "otherness"? Why this constant solace and reminder?



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§ 16. viii. 56, while denying Monopsychism and insisting on freedom and peculiar independence of each centre of consciousness, he allows, *εἰ καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀλλήλων ἔνεκα γεγόμεν*; where Rendall transl.: "Be we ever so much made for one another, our Inner Selves have each their own sovereign rights." So viii. 59: *οἱ ἄνθρωποι γεγόμεσιν ἀλλήλων ἔνεκεν; ἢ διδάσκει οὖν ἢ φέρε*.—ix. 1. As a fundamental and irrefragable premise, *τῆς γὰρ τῶν ὅλων φύσεως κατεσκευακυίας τὰ λογικὰ ζῶα ἔνεκεν ἀλλήλων*.—xi. 18 in a list of short maxims which he is ever to keep on his tongue's tip to meet any sudden crisis, *ὅτι ἀλλήλων ἔνεκεν γεγόμεν*. Thus we shall find with the label *κοινωνικόν* or *πολιτικόν*, the whole argument for man's social virtue is assumed, and the philosopher saved further trouble of proof.—iii. 4: *ζ. κοινωνικοῦ . . . συγγενές πᾶν τὸ λογικόν . . . κήδεσθαι πάντων ἀνθρ. κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσιν ἐ*.—v. 29. Man is defined, without fear of doubt or denial, as *λογικὸν κ. κοινωνικὸν ζῶον*.—ix. 16: *λογικὸν καὶ πολιτικὸν ζῶον*.—iii. 5: *ζώου ἄρρενος κ. πρεσβύτου κ. πολιτικοῦ κ. Ῥωμαίου κ. ἄρχοντος*.—iii. 7: *νοέρου πολιτικοῦ ζώου*.—vi. 14: *ψυχὴ λογικὴ καθολικὴ κ. πολιτικὴ* (as above).—vi. 44. My nature is *λογικὴ κ. πολιτικὴ*.—vii. 68. The present occasion is for me *ὑλὴ ἀρετῆς λογικῆς κ. πολιτικῆς κ. τὸ σύνολον τέχνης ἀνθρώπου ἢ θεοῦ*.—vii. 72. "Whatever *ἢ λογικὴ κ. πολιτικὴ δύναμις* (= the Spirit, the Inner Self) find to be neither *νοερὸν* nor *κοινωνικόν*, it will despise.—viii. 2: *τί πλέον ἐπιζητῶ, εἰ τὸ παρὸν ἔργον ζώου νοεροῦ κ. κοινωνικοῦ κ. ἰσονόμου θεῶ*.

§ 17. In this perhaps tedious recital we shall at least see (what might escape us in a translation) how profound a conviction was this of the affinity and

mutual service of men, and how rigid the formula or language which expressed it.

Nothing, therefore, that happens well for the community, for the swarm, for the universe, is bad for citizen, the bee, the man. v. 22: "Ὁ τῇ πόλει οὐκ ἐ. βλαβερὸν, οὐδὲ τὸν πολίτην βλάπτει.—v. 54: τὸ τῷ σμήνει μὴ σύμφερον, οὐδὲ τῇ μελίσση συμφερεῖ.—x. 20: Συμφέρεῖ ἐκάστῳ ὃ φέρεῖ ἐκάστῳ ἢ τῶν ὅλων Φύσις.—x. 33: ὅλως δὲ μεμνήσο ὅτι τὸν φύσει πολίτην οὐδὲν βλάπτει ὃ πόλιν οὐ βλάπτει.—x. 6: οὐδὲν γὰρ βλαβερὸν τῷ μέρει ὃ τῷ ὅλῳ συμφέρεῖ.—vi. 44: ἡ δὲ ἐμὴ φύσις λογικὴ κ. πολιτικὴ, πόλις κ. πάτρις ὡς μὲν Ἀντωνίνῳ μοι ἢ Ῥώμῃ ὡς δὲ ἀνθρώπῳ ὁ κόσμος. Τὰ ταῖς πόλεσιν οὖν ταύταις ὠφέλιμα, μόνα ἐ. μοι ἀγαθά.—vi. 45: ὅσα ἐκάστῳ συμβαίνει, ταῦτα τῷ Ὄλω συμφέρεῖ.

CHAPTER II

MAN AND THE WORLD

(A) THE TWO COMMONWEALTHS AND THE CITIZEN, AS AGENT OR QUIETIST

ANALYSIS

- § 1. *Man is member of two societies, world and State (nearly always carefully coupled), each with its duty, Resignation and Benevolence; in the end, both virtues pass into mystic piety.*
- § 2. *(Insistence on duties to gods and men.)*
- § 3. *(= Passive and active side of morality.)*
- § 4. *(= perfect contentment with both; will he ever attain this perfection?)*
- § 5. *Acquiescence and Resignation at last given the chief place among Virtues; Holiness and Justice include all others.*

§ 1. THERE are, then, two chief relations (which will best be described by the following series of quotations), one to the world and God, the *greater city*; the other, to the lesser community, *human society*. Marcus is nearly always careful to couple them; rarely do we find one apart from the other in independence. Resignation and acquiescence in the world-order, the *passive* side, is complementary to the *active* side, or vigorous beneficence and social virtue. Disappeared has all that fulmination and defiance against "Fortuna" which characterized the more theatrical pages of Seneca. This he has learnt



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cence in fate nor work among the brethren, but the serene contemplation of the soul's essential oneness with the Author of all.—Thus the twofold duty, or recognition of the objective State and Law, greater and less, gives way before the new or newly-read teaching of the Deity within; for the call to philosophy is not the misery of the world of men, or the beauty or inexorable sequence of Nature, but the personal need of peace and salvation.

§ 2. ii. 15 : (Best service of God within is) *καθαρὸν πάθους διατηρεῖν . . . κ. δυσαρεστήσεως τῆς πρὸς τὰ ἐκ θεῶν κ. ἄνθρωπων γινόμενα*, and the first are *αἰδέσιμα δι' ἀρετήν*, the latter *φιλά διὰ συγγένειαν*.—iii. 5 : *τοῖς θεοῖς ὑποτεταχότος ἑαυτὸν* (like some Socrates) *κ. τῶν ἀνθρ. προκηδομένου*.—iii. 7. To this dual attitude the constant collocation *νοερὸν* (*λογικὸν*) and *πολιτικὸν* noted above has reference.—iii. 9 : *τὴν πρὸς ἀνθρώπους οἰκείωσιν κ. τὴν τοῖς θεοῖς ἀκολουθίαν*.—iii. 11. At each event say *τοῦτο μὲν παρὰ θεοῦ ἦκει . . . τοῦτο δὲ παρὰ τοῦ συμφύλου κ. συγγενούς*. 13. Always remembering in each action *τῆς ἀμφοτέρων πρὸς ἀλληλὰ συνδέσεως* *Οὔτε γὰρ ἀνθρώπινόν τι ἄνευ τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ θεῖα συναναφορᾶς εὔ πράξεις, οὔτ' ἔμπαλιν* (here we have the close association of the two complementary halves of man's duty).—iv. 3. (On discontent, what is it aimed at?) *τῇ τῶν ἀνθρ. κακίᾳ ; τοῖς ἐκ τῶν ὄλων ἀπονεμομένοις ;* (where we notice substitution of natural causes, in fate, for the divine (and almost personal) providence hitherto discussed). Nowhere has he stated his position so clearly and tersely as in v. 25 : *'Εγὼ νῦν ἔχω ὃ με θέλει νῦν ἔχειν ἢ κοινὴ Φύσις, κ. πράσσω ὃ με νῦν πράσσειν θέλει ἢ ἐμὴ φύσις*. Here the *universal Nature*, which at this stage in his *Meditations* sup-

plants the gods, is the law of destiny, apportioning, severally, joy and sorrow to each: *my peculiar* nature is the social instinct of man, *κοινωφελής, κοινωνικός*. (Though it is difficult in such interdependence and implication to insulate any one side, yet it will be necessary to speak more fully upon this half-contrast, half-conciliation of the two "Natures," the world's and ours, because in this consisted the great crux of the whole Stoic philosophy.)

§ 3. v. 27. Man's duty divided into *passive* and *active* side of morality: *ἀρεσκομένην μὲν τοῖς ἀπονεμομένοις, ποιούσαν δὲ ὅσα βούλεται ὁ Δαίμων . . . ἐκάστου νοῦς κ. λόγος*. Here it may not be altogether fanciful to note in anticipation of Marcus' final mysticism, that the personal *within* seems to compensate for the *neuter* and fatalistic *without*.—vi. 16. Reverence for your *διάνοια* makes you *ἀρεστόν* to yourself, *κ. τοῖς ἄνθρ. εὐάρμοστον κ. τοῖς θεοῖς σύμφωνον*.—vi. 30: *αἰδοῦ θεούς, σῶζε ἄνθρώπους*.—vi. 41. We can avoid blaming heaven and hating men (*μεμφάσθαι θεοῖς κ. ἄνθρώπους μισῆσαι*), by knowing that only *τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν* are good and evil: then will there be no reason either to *θεῶ ἐγκαλέσαι* or *στήναι στάσιν πολεμίου πρὸς ἄνθρ.* (where, after an interval, we may note the recurrence of orthodox phrases).—vii. 52: *εὐτακτότερος ἐπὶ τοῖς συμβαίνουσιν . . . εὐμενέστερος πρὸς τὰ τῶν πλησίον παροράματα*.—54: *τῇ παρούσῃ συμβάσει θεοσεβῶς εὐαρεστεῖν κ. τοῖς παρούσιν ἄνθρώπους κατὰ δικαιοσύνην προσφέρεσθαι*.—55: *διὰ τῶν συμβαινόντων σοι*, opposed to *διὰ τῶν πρακτέων ὑπὸ σοῦ*.—vii. 66. He asks Socrates if he can be thus contented, *ἀρκεῖσθαι τῷ δίκαιος εἶναι τὰ πρὸς ἄνθρώπους, κ. ὅσιος τὰ πρὸς θεούς*.—viii. 23: *Πράσσω τι; Πράσσω ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων*

εὐποιῶν ἀναφέρων. . . . Συμβαίνει τί μοι; δέχομαι ἐπὶ τοὺς θεοὺς ἀναφέρων κ. τὴν πάντων πηγήν ἀφ' ἧς πάντα τὰ γινόμενα συμμηρῦεται (where, it may be noted, we find a mixture of the personal and placable providence of the gods, identified, or at least set side by side, with the scheme of predestinarian Fatalism).

§ 4. In viii. 27 he adds another relation to the body (for I feel compelled to adopt Coraës' reading, *σωματίου* for *αἵτιον*): *Τρεῖς σχέσεις· ἡ μὲν πρὸς τὸ σωματίου τὸ περικειμένον· ἡ δὲ πρὸς τὴν θείαν αἰτίαν ἀφ' ἧς συμβαίνει πᾶσι πάντα· ἡ δὲ πρὸς τοὺς συμβιοῦντας.*—viii. 34. As hand or any other limb cut off from body, so is ὁ μὴ θέλων τὸ συμβαῖνον . . . ἢ ὁ ἀκοινωνητόν τι πράσσω. —viii. 43. The joyful satisfaction of my nature reached, if my Inner Self turn from none of our fellows and find fault with nothing which happens to men. (*μήτ' ἀποστρεφόμενον μήτ' ἀνθρώπων τινα, μήτε τι τῶν ἀνθρώποις συμβαινόντων*). This is true health, *ὑγιὲς ἔχειν τὸ Ἡγεμονικόν.*—ix. 6. What suffices (*ἀρκεῖ*) for moral judgment and so for perfect happiness and content: *ἡ παροῦσα πράξις κοινωνικὴ κ. ἡ παροῦσα διάθεσις εὐαρεστικὴ πρὸς πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τῆς ἐκτὸς Αἰτίας συμβαῖνον.*—ix. 31. *Ἀταραξία μὲν περὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκτὸς Αἰτίας συμβαινόντων· δικαιοσύνη δὲ ἐν τοῖς παρὰ τὴν ἐκ σοῦ αἰτίαν ἐνεργουμένοις.* (Here note in passing the clear emphasis on the freedom of the will; man's agency is the single exception in the chain of fatal and predetermined series. Stoicism, in some points the very counterpart, is in others the very opposite, of Calvinism.)—x. 1. Marcus somewhat despondingly asks if his soul will ever be such as to live with gods and men in fullest sympathy, *θεοῖς τε κ. ἀνθρώποις συμπολιτεύεσθαι ὡς μήτε μεμφείσθαι τι αὐτοῦς, μήτε κατα-*



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φιληῆς τὸ ἀπονεμόμενον, the latter, ἵνα . . . λέγῃς τε τὰληθῆ κ. πράσσης τὰ κατὰ νόμον κ. κατ' ἀξίαν.—xii. 24: ἐπὶ μὲν ὧν ποιεῖς. . . ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἔξωθεν συμβαινόντων.—27. Nothing more worthy of Philosophy than to make oneself δίκαιον, σώφρονα, θεοῖς ἐπόμενον (where σώφρονα adds the purely personal relation to self, we noted once before; which usually is, without doubt, included in the *social*, but which, even to Marcus, was beginning to have a paramount interest).—xii. 32: Μηδὲν μεγὰ φαντάζου ἢ τὸ ὡς μὲν ἢ σὴ φύσις ἄγει ποιεῖν, πάσχειν δὲ ὡς ἢ κοινὴ Φύσις φέρει.

(B) THE PROBLEM OF "CONFORMITY TO NATURE";
VARYING DEFINITIONS OF Φύσις

ANALYSIS

- § 6. *Difficult task of disguising difference of world and man; is man to be identified or contrasted with Nature? which nature is to guide us?*
- § 7. *Post-Aristotelians preoccupied with their own peculiar nature; the world outside, unknowable and surrendered to Fortune.*
- § 8. *Result; pure subjectivity; man out of a place in a realm of fixed law; no assured confidence in efficacy of "Virtue."*
- § 9. *Had it any place in a Divine yet transient world? belief in personal deities revives (Boissier).*
- § 10. *The "differentia" of man something isolated and unique; conflict to-day between scientific and Democratic (Christian) ideals.*
- § 11. *In a changeless and unprogressive universe, man has no other duty than to be still; promised or assumed unity and affinity in the two commonwealths disappears.*

§ 6. Now this last quotation will form an excellent link to unite the series just completed with a new set,

very similar to the foregoing, occasionally (as in this case) cutting across them. And these point to an essential *difference* or disparateness in the nature of man and the Nature of the Universe,—*my* peculiar nature, and that *universal* power with which we are sometimes identified and absorbed, sometimes set in more or less conscious contrast. This recalls one of the most interesting phases in the early history of the Stoic School.

The Phœnician (?) founder of the School, adapting a certain Oriental gravity to the maxims of the Cynics, had ingenuously proposed the rule "Follow Nature" as the end of life and the only certain guide to happiness. For to the Hellene there was no question as to the *interested* end of all speculation or practice. An unselfish objective standard based on the needs of the State or of individuals, was to them inconceivable. Does not Marcus himself, most unselfish of men, lay down *παντὶ γὰρ συγγνώμη τὸ ἴδιον ἀγαθὸν ζητοῦντι*; xi. 16? Now the acute Greek mind was not long in discovering the worthlessness of such ambiguous advice. The Cynics, spoilt children, flattered and indulged and deemed almost divine because they sank below the ordinary average, had attempted to conceal or expel the *distinctively human* in man. They reverted to primitive barbarism, while boasting the citizenship of the world; and it is by a supreme irony that later ages looked on Socrates as a Cynic, who so stoutly professes his indifference to natural phenomena, and his indebtedness to human society alone for all he knew and cared about. But, in the ample leisure for reflexion after Alexander's conquest, and the complete separation of active and theoretic life, the new disciple of the

Phenician saw the need for clearer definition. Which Nature was to be our guide? the external or the inward? the general or the peculiar and special? Clearly the founder meant to inveigh broadly against the luxury and complexity of civilized life; for there is nothing to show that they seriously contemplated what we should call a higher ethical standard.¹ It was a recall to simplicity, and (like most Hellenic systems) a protest against the conventions and tyranny of City-life.

§ 7. But the keynote of all these post-Aristotelian Schools is the sense of solitariness, of enforced inaction, of subjective and incommunicable perfection. The Stoic or Epicurean or Sceptic, whether Greek or Roman, is always “Athanasius contra Mundum”; shut up in the very narrow limits of his own impressions, invalid for anyone but himself. Stoical dogmatism only threw a veil over this mournful doubt; and even if it was sincerely believed, could only amount to this: that Nature, Source and Guide of all, was certain in her workings, and inexorable, and out of range of human understanding or sympathy. The frequency of these assurances, addressed to oneself, that the “Universe is good, and no harm befalls the wise,”—the rigidity of these formulæ learnt off in the School, and held in readiness in the mental arsenal for any emergency,—seems to show how superficial was their professed contentment with the world as it is.

¹ For example, there is nothing to prove that the School interfered with Hellenic ἔργα. It may be to-day condemned as “unnatural,” but it was never included in any condemnation of τὰ παρὰ φύσιν, and was certainly practised or allowed by Stoic leaders. For Aurelius did not owe to Stoicism, but to Antoninus, his resolution “to give up boy-favourites.” Epictetus (in common with most Cynic and Stoic dogmatists) believed that *naturally* κοινὰ αἱ γυναῖκες.



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plausibility had from the same data proved the world to be the devil's work. Let us examine of what kind was this divine environment, in which the Sage felt himself so little at home. It was a complex system of unalterable law, which had existed from all eternity, or at least from a far-off catastrophe of fire, a "Ragnarök," in which even the gods were reabsorbed. The notion of progress, of advance, was therefore both impious and inconceivable. The moral life of man, on which they laid so much stress, existed in this complex of automatic perfection a thing apart, strange and uncomfortable. There was no efficacy in virtue, no result at all, except the serene composure in the good man's soul; which on occasion could be exchanged for the defiant hatred of the disillusioned Brutus: ὦ πλῆμον Ἀρετῆ, λόγος ἄρ' ἦσθ' ἐγὼ δὲ σὲ ὡς ἔργον ἦσκουν.

§ 9. For it is impossible to see what function virtue or moral effort can perform in such a world, divine and therefore stationary, fire-born and therefore transitory. We may readily expect the truly earnest minds to turn from the frank materialism of the early School to a more spiritual conception, and to ally themselves with religious faith. Epicurus is very pregnant and commendable in his well-known query: "What is the use of ridding ourselves of the fear of heaven if we are to bow to natural law? Better were our former masters; for, tyrants though they were, they were at least propitiable, whereas physical fate is inexorable, blind, uniform." Marcus, as we have seen, continually wavers between the *impersonal* Nature (ἡ τῶν ὄλων φύσις) and the more comforting *personal* sense of gods in the universe, apportioning to each man his lot. It was

assuredly the urgent need in morals of some reinforcement, from tradition and popular sentiment, that led to this new alliance (called Syncretism) between the exiled deities and the new mechanical theory of the universe. It was the personal finite reason protesting against the cold or immoral dictates of the "Pure or Speculative Intelligence." The former can never be satisfied with general laws, or with an assurance of its own nothingness. He will seek relief in the most unexpected and unpromising quarters. Boissier in his *Roman Religion* has well described the revival of Faith in the first two centuries after Christ. The utter lack of correspondence in Scientific Fatalism, between the effort and recompense, the labour and the success, in the case of moral action, will surely drive average men to careless indifference or pleasure; and no ceaseless Buddhistic repetitions of formulæ will save the sensitive soul from despair. The outer Nature, then, had nothing in common with man's moral and social instinct, and provided no certainty for its exercise or usefulness.

§ 10. The "differentia" of man, his *οἰκείον ἔργον*, the theoretic contemplation of the laws of being, his sense of sympathy with his kindred, was something utterly distinct and abhorrent from the rest of natural things; it was not in the same plane. This was never, indeed, divulged in so many words by the Stoics; indeed, the fallacy of the Law of Nature, as prescribing morality, lasts well into our own days; but they were dimly and uneasily conscious of the gulf. It was Professor Huxley who clearly propounded in his *Evolution and Ethics* what had been long suspected, that there was no affinity whatever between

the two realms.¹ The "onus probandi" rests with those who, like Dr. Drummond, believe there is only one set of laws in the universe. There may be pleasant and frequent analogies, or unlooked-for harmonies; but these should never obscure the intense initial contrast, on which depends our European fabric and our personal hope. Only such fantastic anarchists in theory as Nietzsche, "Maxim Gorki," Méréjowsky, can afford, or perhaps are bold enough, in innocent speculation to follow logically on the lessons of Nature; and show that the subservience of a once aristocratic world to democratic Christianity is one long mistake, and must be rectified by a return to the primitive instinct of rapine, plunder, and the pride of strength and cruelty. All this, though happily only a wild theory of a few kindly and gifted individuals, is quite in accordance with Nature's advice to the nascent soul. The axioms of scientific Naturalism have become wearisomely familiar to us in the past thirty years; "the struggle for existence," "the weakest to the wall," "the survival of the fittest," and (may we add?) "the Devil take the hindmost." No wonder that a compassionate democratic Socialism, built on the substructure of Christian ethics, feminine, self-forgetting, calls for an end of this ceaseless warfare and carnage, at least in the human family; and others desire to include even the animals in the general truce. The nineteenth century ends in a

¹ He must cordially have approved of *one* passage in our author, where the discontinuity and essential diversity of *natural* and *moral* are recognised with unusual force; vi. 17: "Ἀνω κάτω κύκλω φοραὶ τῶν στοιχείων! Ἡ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς κίνησις ἐν οὐδεμιᾷ τούτων ἀλλὰ θειότερόν τι κ. ὁδῶ δυσεπινοήτῳ προΐούσα εὐοδεῖ. (R.: "Upwards, downwards, round and round course the elements. But the motion of virtue is none of these; of some diviner mould, it pursues the even tenor of courses unimagined.")



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of the age-long contest of logic and abstract speculation, with the forces and prejudices of "unregenerate" human nature; refusing, in a strong sense of personal value, to be made a tool for the furthering of the kingdom of Science, the advance of the Millennium, or the triumph of the "Over-man."

§ 11. What seems most to have impressed the Greeks in their criticism of the Universe was that you could not *know* its purpose in the same way you could understand the motive of a friend or fellow-citizen, and that you could not *foresee* or *avoid* the certainty of its operations. This humiliating ignorance or impotence is thinly concealed beneath hymns to the majesty of God, as Nature or as Fate; for it is surely superfluous to remind the reader that the three terms are interchangeable. Acquiescence is therefore the sole virtue, face to face with the workings of unknowable law and sequence; and the constant rebuke of discontent (*δυσἀρέστησις*) may be due, partly to a religious sense of impiety, partly to a more practical dislike of the folly of temper and grumbling at what cannot be helped. It was a "counsel of utility" as well as a "counsel of perfection." As for any anticipation of the Baconian "regnum hominis," or modern scientific improvements, we look in vain. Clearly, Lucilius and Seneca, to name two instances, believed it was sacrilege either to explore practically the secrets of Nature or to adapt such knowledge to human uses. Both struck across that curious religious feeling which identified God and the world, and that sense of self-sufficingness in simplicity which was the starting-point of the Cynic and Stoic system. Seneca might, indeed, enjoy and use as a wealthy nobleman, but he could not justify as a

philosopher, the multiplication of conveniences and comforts. Therefore, in this changeless "world, eternal (at least in relation to us), we hope for no advance, no effort is of avail, and Quietism remains the sole rule of conduct. We may add that we shall find the same depressing consciousness of vanity, of the futility of striving and endeavour, when we come to social relations. As the Universe is in the last resort impenetrable by knowledge and prayer, so each of our kindred is in his soul a "windowless monad," inaccessible to our influence. An independent disaggregated Atomism is the result of this boasted unity and affinity; and it is only the wholesome instinct of the Roman and the aristocrat that keeps Marcus not only to the passive tolerance of men he cannot understand, but to active endeavour in a society which is incurable and unchanging.

(C) INHERENT DIVERSITY OF THE NATURE OF MAN
AND THE WORLD

ANALYSIS

- § 12. (*Texts of diversity between man's nature and the world's.*)
- § 13. *Each man a law to himself; he veers round to a complete subjectivity; negative attitude to Nature and men; positive guidance only from within.*
- § 14. *"Follow own constitution"; careful "physiology" necessary for virtue.*
- § 15. *Stoic creed no real support for his nature (or instinctive) goodness; only a mere appendage; he feels, but he cannot communicate or convince.*
- § 16. *Marcus errs in believing himself indebted to Stoicism; Science and System teach him nothing he did not know before.*

§ 12. We may now examine the passages in which man's *special* nature is contrasted with the *Universe*.

ii. 9 : *Τούτων ἀεὶ δεῖ μεμνηῆσθαι τίς ἢ τῶν ὅλων Φύσις κ. τίς ἢ ἐμὴ κ. πῶς αὕτη πρὸς ἐκείνην ἔχουσα κ. ὁποῖόν τι μέρος ὁποίου τοῦ ὅλου οὔσα.*—iii. 1. He speaks of his words carrying conviction only to τῷ πρὸς τὴν Φύσιν κ. τὰ ταύτης ἔργα γνησίως ὠκειωμένῳ (well translated by Rendall: “Him only who is in harmony with Nature and her sincere familiar”).—iii. 4. This class is termed in the old and almost obsolete phraseology of the earlier School: τῶν ὁμολογουμένως τῇ Φύσει βιούντων.—iii. 9. Harbour in the Inner Self no thought (ὑπόληψις) which is ἀνακόλουθος τῇ Φύσει κ. τῇ τοῦ λογικοῦ ζώου κατασκευή (this is the first technical occurrence of this word, which is used for man’s physical and mental conformation about fifteen times, and always in similar contexts).—iv. 25. The life of the good man ἀρεσκομένου μὲν τοῖς ἐκ τῶν Ὀλων ἀπονεμομένοις, ἀρκουμένου δὲ τῇ ἰδίᾳ πράξει δικαία κ. διαθέσει εὐμενεῖ. Here note that Marcus gets no active or practical encouragement or advice from the world’s course; he is *negative* in this regard, merely motionless before that which befalls :

“Beneath the bludgeonings of Chance
My head is bloody but unbowed.”

This defiance he restates as pietistic resignation. His practical life, its *positive* content, he gets from an inner voice calling to works of mercy and fellow-feeling, to which there is no clue outside.

So 32: It is the “*special* endowment or equipment,” the “diversity of gift,” that is to be the guide, ποιεῖν τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν κατασκευήν κ. τούτου ἀπρὶξ ἔχεσθαι. This law of one’s being, more cogent severally than the outer Law, is called ὁ λόγος τῆς παρασκευῆς, iv. 5, where Rendall translates “reason of its con-



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its parts, which are more or less incompatible, not “in pari materiâ”; and note also that the outer Nature gives no positive guidance.—viii. 12. “When you rise sluggishly in the morning” (a special failing of the Emperor, as it would seem), remember that *ὅτι κατὰ τὴν κατασκευήν σου ἐστὶ κ. κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπικὴν φύσιν τὸ πράξεις κοινωνικὰς ἀποδιδόναι*, whereas the faculty of sleep is no “differentia,” but is common to man with the unreasoning animals: *ὃ δὲ κατὰ φύσιν ἐκάστῳ τοῦτο οἰκειότερον κ. προσφύτερον καὶ δὴ καὶ προσηνέστερον*. For Marcus is struck by the laborious failure of the life of pleasure and self-indulgence, and, in his perfectly frank search for personal satisfaction, finds in social action alone his peculiar duty, and therefore (so ran the syllogism of Teleology) his abiding contentment.

§ 14: For (viii. 26) *εὐφροσύνη ἀνθρώπου ποιεῖν τὰ ἴδια ἀνθρώπου. Ἴδιον δὲ ἀνθρώπου, εὐνοία πρὸς τὸ ὁμόφυλον . . . ἐπιθεώρησις τῆς τῶν ὅλων Φύσεως κ. τῶν κατ’ αὐτὴν γινομένων*. Here is man’s function; in double rôle of critic and appraiser of Nature, and agent in the smaller world; this corresponds with the definition *λογικόν, πολιτικόν*.—viii. 45. Whatever befalls *ἔξω τὸν ἐμὸν Δαίμονα ἴλεων . . . εἰ ἔχοι κ. ἐνεργοίη κατὰ τὸ ἐξῆς τῇ ἰδίᾳ κατασκευῇ*.—viii. 52. Knowledge of self and of world (two quite different studies) indispensable for correct moral action: *‘Ὁ μὲν μὴ εἰδὼς ὅ τι ἐστὶ Κόσμος, οὐκ οἶδεν ὅπου ἐστίν. ‘Ὁ δὲ μὴ εἰδὼς πρὸς ὅ τι πέφυκεν οὐκ οἶδεν ὅστις ἐ. οὐδὲ τί ἐ. Κόσμος. ‘Ὁ δὲ ἐν τι τούτων ἀπολιπὼν οὐδὲ πρὸς ὅ τι πέφυκεν εἴποι*. It may be questioned whether Marcus found that the wider knowledge (the *φυσιολογία* of the later books) really threw much light on man’s social duty. Science has always exerted a benumbing influence on the eager-

ness of common life; and it must be remembered that the so-called Stoic "theology" is but a department of natural investigation.—iv. 29: ποιῆσον δὲ νῦν ἢ φύσις ἀπατεῖ, a formula which recalls the old inexactness of the canon, "Follow Nature," and gets over the difficulty of reconciling the two duties by confusing them,—a trick common to all Pantheistic systems.—ix. 42. Man fulfils the purpose of his nature, lives agreeably to his constitution in moral agency among his fellows, and therefore, by a certain (optimistic) law, gains fullest satisfaction: (limbs of body) κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν κατασκευὴν ἐνεργοῦντα ἀπέχει τὸ ἴδιον (where Rendall: "Find their reward in realising the law of their being"). Οὕτω κ. ὁ ἄνθρωπος εὐεργετικὸς πεφυκῶς, when he does a kindly action, πεποίηκε πρὸς δὲ κατεσκευάσται κ. ἔχει τὸ ἑαυτοῦ.

§ 15. It is, of course, far from our purpose to doubt the sincerity of the Emperor's experience. Had he been convinced of the fortuitous atomism of the world-process, he would still have found his highest *pleasure* (for he never shrinks from hedonistic terms) in "showing mercy and pity"; and we should admire him no less. What we want to point out is that his abstract and logical Monism gives no better support, explanation, encouragement, for the life which (by a somewhat foolish anomaly) is called "self-denying" (for ἔχει τὸ ἑαυτοῦ). This civic virtue flourishes independent of his philosophic creed, because he is "Antoninus and a Roman," and still more because he is "permeated with religious faith in a Providence which Stoicism proper did its best to expel."—x. 33. That it was ultimately no School "maxims," but his empiric conviction, which led him to the social life, is clear again (as to ἡδυπαθοῦσιν

ἢ τρυφή); so it should come natural to you τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς . . . ὑποπιπτούσης ὕλης ποιεῖν τὰ οἰκεία τῇ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατασκευῇ· ἀπόλαυσιν γὰρ δεῖ ὑπολαμβάνειν πᾶν ὃ ἔξεστι κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν φύσιν ἐνεργεῖν. Such action is to him “love, joy, peace”; his subjective delight (incommunicable to others) sets the stamp of Nature’s approval on his choice. It is only by accident or carelessness that he acts otherwise. So the ultimate test is this subjective feeling; and everyone else must be left to follow his own particular bent. For Marcus, though convinced himself of the superiority of the social life, of tolerance and self-denial and concession, cannot convince others, and does not attempt to. It may here perhaps be remarked that in a sense all systems, even of the austere deontology, are in the last resort “hedonistic”; for the only reason of acceptance is approbation, and approbation of the good is the highest form of pleasure. On this final “hedonistic” standard there is a very beautiful and acute passage in Seneca, Ep. lxxvi.: “*Pro patria moriaris . . . salutem omnium civium tuâ redimas . . . non tantum patienter sed libenter. Si hoc facturus es, nullum aliud bonum est: omnia relinquis ut hoc habeas* (‘went and sold all that he had’; for here is ‘the pearl of great price’). Vide, quanta vis honesti sit? *Pro Republicâ morieris . . . interdum ex re pulcherrima magnum gaudium etiam tempore brevi ac exiguo capitur; et quamvis fructus operis peracti nullus ad defunctum exemptumque rebus humanis pertineat, ipsa tamen contemplatio futuri operis juvat: et vir fortis et justus quum mortis suæ pretia ante se posuit, libertatem patriæ, salutem omnium pro quibus dependit animam, in summâ voluptate est et periculo suo fruitur.*”—x. 36. Man’s function is now, by



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“No one can change his character,” says Cardinal Newman; and Marcus would have been unselfish, in the same curious desponding way, among savages, and in face of the certain dissolution of souls in an accidental world. But his character is a beautiful and divine gift, and shines and burns like the good deed in a naughty world, irrespective of any fuel derived from Stoic tenets. Nay, rather these latter are incapable of obscuring the innate kindness, the religious unction, of the noblest of Roman Emperors. His devotion gets no confirmation from an *unprejudiced* survey of the world; nor can he make others think like him, that the “Beauty of Holiness” is the aim of the rational creature.

CHAPTER III

ABSOLUTE SUBJECTIVITY

(A) COMPLETE ISOLATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL FROM THINGS AND FROM HIS FELLOW-MEN

ANALYSIS

- § 1. (1) *Personality, a "windowless monad," impenetrable (later to be contrasted with his psychic solidarity); (2) Things absolutely still and lifeless.*
- § 2. *Duty to others = negative tolerance; mind and motive of other men beyond reach and understanding.*
- § 3. *Others cannot help their acts, and it is vain to be indignant or eager to reform.*
- § 4. *There must be such people in a world of all sorts; why then blame or despise? (no Standard or Value left except (Hegelian) fact of existence).*

§ 1. AFTER the emphasis on the peculiar "propriety" (*ἰδιον*) of man's character, duty, and nature, which has emerged in our last series of passages, we must advance still further towards the isolation of the personality, not merely from the rest of creatures, but also from its especial kindred. "Forget also thine own people and thy father's house." And this doctrine of the impenetrable solitude of each Soul is all the more astounding because it is combined with a genuine belief in the solidarity of all rational beings, and with many phrases

of the most uncompromising Monopsychism. We may be thankful that Marcus makes no attempt to be consistent or symmetrical; we are content to find in this very confusion of his thought, assurance of his perfect sincerity. We must put side by side (1) those sections where he pronounces the Soul (the real or "Inner Self") of other men to be inaccessible to his influence, or, strictly, even to his sympathy. (We shall in the next chapter note those passages in which he theorizes on the ultimate unity and identity of all Soul. In the one case, the distinction, the separateness, is final; in the second, it has no existence. In the one, personality is the single irrefragable fact of experience; in the other, it is a pure illusion. Which of these dogmas is the real belief of Marcus, I know not; I incline to think he felt his solitariness too keenly to give more than "lip service" to the hypothesis of a Single Soul or intelligence common to all men.) We shall add (2) those very striking passages in which he shows the absolute stillness of things, the absurdity of the belief that they have life and movement in themselves, or even sway or control our consciousness.

§ 2. On a closer survey, the social duty is attenuated into a negative tolerance of other men; a duty which is rather to oneself than to others, of never feeling annoyance, anger, indignation at their faults. What they say about one is indifferent, and the wise man should pay no attention to report or fame. Sometimes the reason is the general Stoic belief that happiness cannot depend on anything *external* to consciousness (*ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις ψυχαῖς τιθέσθαι τὴν εὐμοίριαν*, ii. 6); sometimes, when even Marcus is unable to conceal his contempt, because we realize how worthless is the judgment or the gossip



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τάνουσι. Φέρονται γὰρ πάντως ὡς ἐπὶ οἰκεῖα κ. συμφέροντα αὐτοῖς. “But it isn’t so.” — “Very well, teach them that, and show them the way without vexation” (οὐκοῦν δίδασκε κ. δείκνυε μὴ ἀγανακτῶν). Similarly v. 28: δείξον, ὑπόμνησον! Εἰ γὰρ ἐπαίει, θεραπεύσεις κ. οὐ χρεία ὀργῆς.—vii. 55: Μὴ περιβλέπου ἀλλότρια ἡγεμονικά . . . πρακτέον ἐκάστῳ τὸ ἐξῆς τῇ κατασκευῇ.—vii. 71. Complete “inwardness” or subjectivity of this moral aim: “You can escape your own evil; other men’s you cannot” (γελοῖόν ἐ. τὴν μὲν ἰδίαν κακίαν μὴ φεύγειν ὁ καὶ δυνατόν ἐ. τὴν δὲ τῶν ἄλλων φεύγειν ὅπερ ἀδύνατον).—viii. 4. You will never reform them! οὐδὲν ἤττον τὰ αὐτὰ ποιήσουσι, κἂν σὺ διαρῥαγῆς.—viii. 14. If he has such principles (δόγματα), there is nothing surprising if he behaves so: κ. μεμνήσομαι ὅτι ἀναγκάζεται οὕτω ποιεῖν. R.: “I shall not be surprised or shocked at his doing such and such things; I shall remember that he *cannot* do otherwise.” (We may perhaps wonder, even if Marcus will not, at this use of “compulsion”; for his entire system is founded on the absolute freedom at any given moment of the soul to choose the right.)—The relativity of the standard is very clearly put in viii. 43: Εὐφραίνει ἄλλον ἄλλο· ἐμὲ δὲ εἰάν ὑγιὲς ἔχω τὸ ἡγεμονικόν. It is natural, then, that he should avow that only certain natures or characters can see the *coagency* of his arguments; iii. 3: πολλὰ τοιαῦτα οὐ παντὶ πιθανὰ μόνῳ δὲ τῷ πρὸς τὴν Φύσιν . . . γνησίως ὠκειωμένῳ.—The only legitimate and (not very effective) instrument of moral reform is persuasion; but one asks, What if the sinner refuses to recognize the postulates? Εἰ μὲν δυνάσαι μεταδίδασκε· εἰ δὲ μὴ, μέμνησο ὅτι πρὸς τοῦτο ἡ εὐμένεια σοι δέδοται, ix. 11; similarly, ix. 42: Ὅλως δὲ ἔξεστι σοι μετα-

διδάσκειν τὸν πεπλανημένον.—ix. 20 : Τὸ ἄλλου ἀμάρτημα ἐκεῖ δεῖ καταλιπεῖν.—In viii. 61 : Εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν ἐκάστου παρέχειν δὲ κ. ἑτέρῳ παντὶ εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἡγ.—,

§ 4. We have only an apparent inconsistency between the earlier contrast *διάβλεπε* and *περιβλέπου* “Let others see your principles, your motives; and do you take their measure, and see if their judgment should carry weight.” The whole of the last paragraph in the Ninth Book is interesting: “When you stumble on the shamelessness of another, straightway ask yourself: *Δύνανται οὖν ἐν τῷ Κόσμῳ ἀναίσχυντοι μὴ εἶναι; οὐ δύνανται* (“offences must needs be”). *Μὴ οὖν ἀπαίτει τὸ ἀδύνατον, εἰς γὰρ κ. οὗτός ἐ. τῶν ἀναισχύντων, οὗς ἀνάγκη ἐν τῷ Κόσμῳ εἶναι.* Apply the same canon in case of the villain, the traitor, and every kind of sinner (*τὸ γένος τῶν τοιούτων, ἀδύνατόν ἐ. μὴ ὑπάρχειν. . . . Τί δαὲ κακὸν ἢ ξένον γέγονεν εἰ ὁ ἀπαιδευτος τὰ τοῦ ἀπαιδευτοῦ πράσσει;*);—we must gently protest against the assumption in the last sentence. If all these different characters are needed for the furtherance of the World’s Purpose (whatever that may be),—so that, as Burke says, “we have that action and counter-action which in the natural and in the political world, from the reciprocal struggle of discordant powers, draws out the harmony of the Universe,”—why, we ask, does Marcus apply a bad and contemptuous name to any one of these diverse, yet (in their proper place) meritorious, units? It is not as if a final standard had been agreed upon. After all, there could be no standard of merit except the *fact* of existence. Yet while Marcus here outstrips the proper limits of indulgent and indifferent critic, we may clearly see his

profound conviction of the uselessness of reform, of any anticipation of a better state of mankind. A God cannot develop; the universe was divine or indeed God; therefore it were impious to connect change for the better either with the greater Commonwealth of Natural Law, or the lesser state of reasonable beings, which, in some unaccountable way, boasted a still closer affinity with the Source of Life. Therefore in a City it is no use to extirpate abuses; therefore, the whole mirage of life is meaningless, and time, instead of making for some "far-off divine event," is mere monotonous succession of the same tedious commonplace.—In x. 4 we have the better side of this tolerant Indifferentism, which is surely a dangerous virtue in a supreme ruler;—what would our Liberals say to the dethronement of their noble Discontent?—*Εἰ μὲν σφάλλεται διδάσκειν εὐμενῶς καὶ τὸ παρορώμενον δεικνύναι. Εἰ δὲ ἀδυνατεῖς σεαυτὸν αἰτιᾶσθαι ἢ μηδὲ σεαυτὸν.* What if by some curious chance he is here speaking of the young Commodus and some boyish escapade, in which, nevertheless (as in the repulsive episode in W. Pater's "Marius" about the broiled kitten), plainly emerged the ill-conditioned brutality or the madness of precocious Cæsarism? It is noticeable that the Emperor never speaks of the remedial power of punishment. It is strange to meditate upon the possible consequences to the world of a little well-placed severity in the early treatment of his son.¹

¹ How deeply pathetic is his double repetition of the old tragic line, where he comforts himself for Heaven's desertion: *εἰ δ' ἡμελήθην ἐκ θεῶν κ. παῖδ' ἐμῷ ἔχει λόγον καὶ τοῦτο* (vii. 41, xi. 6)!



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ζῆν, εἰ συζῆν ἐφεῖτο τοῖς τὰ αὐτὰ δόγματα περιπεποιημένοις. Νῦν δ' ὁρᾶς ὅσος ὁ κόπος ἐν τῇ διαφωνίᾳ τῆς συμβιώσεως ὥστ' εἰπεῖν· “Θάττον ἔλθοις, ὦ Θάνατε μὴ ποῦ κ. αὐτὸς ἐπιλάθωμαι ἑμαυτοῦ.”—xi. 13: Καταφρονήσει μού τις; ὄψεται. (That is his business entirely; I, too, will look to myself, that I be not found doing or saying aught deserving of contempt.) Μισήσει; ὄψεται. Ἄλλ' ἐγὼ εὐμενῆς κ. ἴλεως παντὶ (and ready to point out his fault or omission τὸ παρορώμενον).—Fifth of the maxims laid down in xi. 18 comes οὐδὲ εἰ ἀμαρτάνουσι κατείληφας· πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ κατ' οἰκονομίαν γίνεται. Καὶ ὅλως πολλὰ δεῖ πρότερον μαθεῖν ἵνα τις περὶ ἀλλοτρίας πραξέως καταληπτικῶς τι ἀποφηνηται. Rendall: “You cannot even be sure if they are doing wrong; for many actions depend upon some secondary end.¹ “In short, one has much to learn before one can make sure and certain about another's action.”—This tendency is leading slowly but surely to an absolute denial of the moral standard;² to the peculiar temper of the philosophers of the “Absolute”: who, determined to reach Unity somewhere, abandon the ethical standpoint as dualistic and imperfect, and perhaps feel enamoured of a speedier route

¹ I am inclined myself to connect this difficult word with the familiar Patristic usage: “adaptation of means to ends, condescension to human capacity, scheme of salvation accompanied by many seemingly incongruous details in the pursuit of the grand aim,—all the somewhat misty complex of ideas bound up in the idea of the Divine Stewardship, which (I need scarcely remark), in the Latinized “Dispensation,” disappears entirely.

² e.g. what would some people make of this, ii. 8: Τοὺς τοῖς ἰδίας ψυχῆς κινήμασι μὴ παρακολουθοῦντας ἀνάγκη κακοδαιμονεῖν? Neither substantive suggests any spiritual criterion; and while the maxim might suit the purity of Quakers' “Inner Light,” it might also condone the excesses of the Kingdom of Munster.

to knowledge than by a process retaining the “otherness” of *subject* and *object*.

§ 6. St. Paul’s constant advice, “Judge not another man’s servant,” and his insistence on the subjectivity of Ideals, yet never disturbs the grand and broad outlines of the moral fabric. But Aurelius—warping his better Roman judgment in a school where all “offences are equal,” and “all men either wise or fools, saved or lost,” where everything is bluntly black and white, and nothing shades off in an indistinct borderland—goes far towards denying reality to sin and evil altogether. At most, it is but subjective folly, result of poor principles; try and persuade the sinner, gently remonstrating, and he may mend his ways. In the Ninth, xi. 18 : *πράως παραινής κ. μεταδιδάσκης*, in words which strongly recall the aged and *indulgent* Eli. (“Seize the moment when he is bent on mischief; try quietly to convert him to a better frame of mind” :—“*Not so, my son, we are made for other ends; you cannot hurt me, you hurt yourself, my son.*” R.). *Μή, τέκνον· πρὸς ἄλλο πεφύκαμεν. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ μὴ βλαβῶ, σὺ δὲ βλάβη, τέκνον.*¹ It is an unanswerable argument against Plato’s “Philosopher-King,” that the essential qualities of a Sage are precisely those which are likely to be mischievous in a Ruler. Let us, as leaders of men, have no cynics, but rather eager and enthusiastic strivers for what they believe to be right. Lewis XVI,

¹ In spite of this loving formula, we find Marcus, v. 20, arranging (in a *certain aspect*) even fellow-men among *ἀδιάφορα*. “In one sense *ἡμῶν ἐ. οικειότατον ἄνθρωπος*, inasmuch as we must do good to them and bear patiently with them; *καθ’ ὅσον δ’ ἐνίστανται τινες εἰς τὰ οικεῖα ἔργα, ἐν τι τῶν ἀδιαφόρων μοι γίνεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὐχ ἡσσον ἢ ἥλιος ἢ ἄνεμος ἢ θηρίον* (= “in so far as individuals obstruct my proper action, man falls into the category of things *indifferent*.” R.).

if not an incapable, was a “philosopher-king”; yet the success of that unaccountable movement, the French Revolution, was due to his (unconscious) following Marcus’ rules. A point of view so lofty, an outlook so sublime, of that man and his petty passions and struggles are but the turmoil of an ant-heap,—a judgment so tolerant that it finds excuse for every misdoer,—these are not proper qualifications in a statesman or a sovereign. There is surely nothing gained by belittling human life, by depreciating human concerns. Nor does the ascetic advance morality by arousing contempt for the body. The politician or the king who fails is not the one who takes a side and boldly embraces even his proved mistakes; but the one who loses faith in himself, has no convictions, and sees everything in one dim and dreary atmosphere of grey.

§ 7. At the end of the section he reaches a climax, and decks his pathetic maxim with a quite Platonic poetical trope: “*Tenth*, and lastly—a gift, so please you, from Apollo, leader of the choir” (εἰ δὲ βούλει, καὶ δέκατον παρὰ τοῦ Μουσηγέτου δῶρον λάβε, ὅτι τὸ μὴ ἀξιοῦν ἀμαρτάνειν μανικὸν· ἀδυνάτου γὰρ ἐφίεται). It is madness to ask that evil should cease, or that the bad should stop sinning.—xii. 12: τὸ ἐξῆς τῇ Φύσει (for natural consequences), μήτε θεοῖς μεμπτέον· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐκόντες ἢ ἄκοντες ἀμαρτάνουσι· μήτε ἀνθρώποις· οὐδὲν γὰρ οὐχὶ ἄκοντες. “Ὡστ’ οὐδενὶ μεμπτέον. A more absolute ἐποχὴ or suspension of judgment for want either of materials to form a criterion or from lack of any standard whatsoever,—you will not find in Sextus Empiricus!—xii. 16: ὁ μὴ θέλων τὸν φαῦλον ἀμαρτάνειν, ὅμοιος τῷ μὴ θέλοντι τὴν συκῆν ὀπὸν . . . φέρειν κ. τὰ βρέφη κλαυθυρίζεσθαι, κ. τὸν ἵππον χρεμετίζειν



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between essentials and “indifferents” in behaviour, and the world might perhaps have been spared the sanguinary turbulence of the next hundred years. Truly, when Diocletian rebuilt the shattered palace of civilization, the crumbled edifice of the Roman State, he forgot every maxim of Marcus. He was not for that any the less the Camillus, the second founder of the Empire.

(C) SOUL, WITHOUT REAL CONTACT WITH THINGS-IN-
THEMSELVES, CAN ASSIMILATE AND TRANSMUTE
INTO MATERIAL FOR ITS OWN NURTURE

ANALYSIS

- § 8. *Absolute independence towards outward things; still they may be transmuted from dross into gold by Soul as in a crucible; all can become material for Virtue.*
- § 9. *World of phenomenon has no substantive existence; a glittering mirage (Porch-Materialism ends in pure Idealism); attitude as of Magician to Spirits.*
- § 10. *None of them really come to us; it is we who “call them in”; source of impressions unknowable.*
- § 11. *Man in Solitude; spite of a theoretical Citizenship in two worlds; prevalent “inwardness” or mysticism of the age leaves clear trace on Marcus.*

§ 8. The Sage, in spite of the highest political prerogative, cannot issue forth from the magic circle of his own principles,—I had almost said “impressions”; but he has the complete mastery and control of these; he can transform the sense-message at will; for πάντα ὑπόληψις and his ὑπόληψις is free and final. Now what is his relation to the events, to the “things” of the world? A similar and absolute independence. Each man is accountable to no earthly power save

his own "Inner Self"; and has found the secret of transmuting the base metal of outward occasion into the alchemist's gold of noble choice. Everything is material, ὕλη, for virtuous action. The finest and clearest passage on this subject is at the opening of the Fourth Book: *Τὸ ἔνδον κυριεῦον ὅταν κατὰ φύσιν ἔχη, οὕτως ἔστηκε πρὸς τὰ συμβαίνοντα ὥστε ἀεὶ πρὸς τὸ δύνατον κ. διδόμενον μετατίθεσθαι ῥαδίως.* (R.: "When the Sovereign Power within is true to nature, its attitude towards outward circumstance is that of ready adjustment to whatever is possible and offered for acceptance.") *Ἦλην γὰρ ἀποτεταγμένην οὐδεμίαν φιλεῖ* (= sets its affections on no determinate material) *ἀλλ' ὀρμᾶ πρὸς τὰ ἡγούμενα μεθ' ὑπεξαιρέσεως* (= "keeps each impulse and preference conditional and subject to reservation"). *Τὸ δὲ ἀντισταγόμενον ὕλην ἑαυτῷ ποιεῖ, ὥσπερ τὸ πῦρ ὅταν ἐπικρατῇ τῶν ἐπεμπιπτόντων (ὑφ' ὧν ἂν μικρός τις λύχνος ἐσβέσθη).* ("Obstacles encountered it converts into material for itself, just as fire lays hold of accumulations" [? gets the mastery over all the fuel flung upon it], "which would have choked a feebler light"? *Τὸ δὲ λαμπρὸν πῦρ τάχιστα ἐξωκείωσεν ἑαυτῷ τὰ ἐπιφορούμενα κ. κατηνάλωσεν κ. ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ μείζον ἤρθη.* ("For a blaze of fire at once assimilates all that is heaped on it, consumes it, and derives new vigour from the process." Rendall, iv. 1.) —So v. 20. *Περιτρέπει γὰρ κ. μεθίστησι πᾶν τὸ τῆς ἐνεργείας κώλυμα ἢ Διάνοια εἰς τὸ προηγούμενον.* ("For the Understanding modifies and converts every hindrance to action into furtherance of its prime aim. So that checks to action actually advance it, and obstacles in the way promote progress.") For Marcus, to whom nothing is in unqualified fashion "good but the Good

Will," lays no claim to extensive sovereignty. It may be remembered that Fichte, in one of his eloquent popular writings, rests upon this noble feebleness of the will in the exterior world, a supreme argument for human immortality.—So vii. 68 : ἀεὶ γάρ μοι τὸ παρὸν ὕλη ἀρετῆς κτλ. Πᾶν γὰρ τὸ συμβαῖνον θεῷ ἢ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐξοικειοῦται (adapts and assimilates to itself).—x. 31 : τί γὰρ ἔστι πάντα ταῦτα ἄλλο πλὴν γυμνάσματα λόγου ἑωρακότος ἀκριβῶς κ. φυσιολόγως τὰν τῷ βίῳ ; Μένε οὖν μέχρῃς ἐξοικειώσης σαυτῷ κ. ταῦτα, ὡς ὁ ἐρρωμένος στόμαχος πάντα ἐξοικειοῖ, ὡς τὸ λαμπρὸν πῦρ (= iv. 1) ὅτι ἂν βάλῃς φλόγα ἐξ αὐτῶν κ. αὐγὴν ποιεῖ. (Rendall : "What are they all but exercises for Reason, scientifically and philosophically facing the facts of life? Persevere, then, till you make them part of your own being, just as the healthy stomach assimilates its food, or a quick fire burns everything you throw on it into flame and light.")

§ 9. Now it must be noted that this process entirely depends upon the Soul. In themselves, things are blind and dumb, colourless and immovable. It is we who draw them to ourselves, call them as it were within range of our Reason, and submit them to the alchemical process. In themselves they have no substantive existence: the world of phenomena is a glittering mirage; it is *μάγᾶ* (or illusion). To such idealism, tending even towards solipsism, has the early materialism of the Porch been forced!—iv. 3. Keep among the "weapons most ready to hand," ἐν τοῖς προχειροτάτοις, these two convictions, ἐν μὲν ὅτι τὰ Πράγματα οὐχ ἄπτεται τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀλλ' ἔξω ἔστηκεν ἀτρεμοῦντα· αἱ δὲ ὀχλήσεις ἐκ μόνῃς τῆς ἔνδον ὑπολήψεως. ("Things cannot touch the Soul, but stand



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rather like ghosts, cannot speak unless first interrogated by a mortal. It is only the craven soul who yields to the notion that they can tyrannize. “Lupi Mœrim videre priores.” The bold magician confronts the apparition in his own good time, undeterred by the disconcerting yet harmless gibbering of the Spectres. Rather it is he who summons them at pleasure; of themselves, they cannot and dare not burst into his solitude. *Τὶ οὖν ἀποφαίνεται περὶ αὐτῶν; τὸ Ἡγεμονικόν.*—So once more xi. 11: *Εἰ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἔρχεται ἐπὶ σὲ τὰ Πράγματα ὧν αἱ διώξεις κ. φυγαὶ θορυβοῦσί σε, ἀλλὰ τρόπον τινὰ αὐτὸς ἐπ’ ἐκείνα ἔρχῃ. Τὸ γοῦν κρίμα τὸ περὶ αὐτῶν ἡσυχαζέτω, καὶ κείνα μενεῖ ἀτρεμοῦντα* (not budging, not stirring a foot inside your magic circle, like docile and well-disposed Ariels). R.: “The things it so perturbs you to seek or shun, do not come to you; rather you go to them; only let your judgment of them hold its peace, and their side will remain stationary.”

§ 10. xi. 16. The fairest life (*κάλλιστα διαζῆν*) comes from “indifferēnce” to all things not under our power: *μεμνημένος ὅτι οὐδὲν αὐτῶν ὑπόληψιν περὶ αὐτοῦ ἡμῖν ἐμποιεῖ οὐδ’ ἔρχεται ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς. Ἄλλὰ τὰ μὲν ἀτρεμεῖ ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐσμεν οἱ τὰς περὶ αὐτῶν κρίσεις γεννῶντες κ. (οἶον) γράφοντες ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, ἐξὸν μὲν μὴ γράφειν ἐξὸν δὲ καὶ πού λάθῃ εὐθὺς ἐξαλείψαι.* R.: “Nothing can imbue us with a particular view about itself or enforce an entrance; things are stationary; it is we who originate judgments regarding them, and, as it were, inscribe them upon our minds,—when we need inscribe nothing, or can instantaneously efface any inscription written there unawares.” The Sophists had claimed for the individual the most perfect freedom in assent and

acceptance of convention; the Sceptics (as Sextus Empiricus shows us throughout his work), while preserving this fundamental subjectivity or relativity in theory, had insisted in practice on the wisdom of following the "custom of the country"; and Lucian the popularizer of this half-agnostic, half-dogmatic reaction in favour of society, rejects with ridicule and indignation the pretensions of mystical egoism. He lays down the rule that happiness is found only in the "Common Life, and in wise submission to commonplace" (*βίον κοινὸν ἅπασι βιοῦν ἀξιῶν κ. συμπολιτεύση τοῖς πολλοῖς, οὐδὲν ἀλλόκοτον κ. τετυφωμένον ἐλπίζων. Hermotimus*).

The Stoic while seeming to canonize the social aim, speaks and writes about it in such a way as to leave a loophole for evading its responsibilities; partly by preaching the claims of the wider πόλις of Nature with which they supposed themselves in fuller sympathy, partly also by advancing the policy of abstention, "as God in the world, so the Sage in society."—Again, the early Sophists, the "Aufklärung" of ancient Greece, taught a complete subjective impressionism; and as man in his social life had no real guide or criterion but utility, so in his more personal side he was alone in the middle of incommunicable sensations which were valid only for himself. It is perhaps reserved for Marcus Aurelius to declare that the unknowable source of these varying feelings and emotions is itself, like the supposed fabric of the moral and Social Law, pure hallucination. It is true that he does not commit himself to denying the existence of phenomena; but they exist purely subjectively, in the terms and at the will and pleasure of the mind, which neglects, estimates, or employs.

Seduced by this motionless, yet inviting mirage in life's wilderness, the unwary soul submits itself to a voluntary slavery; "me rebus subjungere conor," the modern "adaptation to environment" (a phrase which the Emperor must have condemned as abandoning life's central truth). "Te facimus Fortuna deam Cœloque locamus." But the Sage, like Adam amid the lower creatures, gives names and values to things which in themselves have neither meaning nor coherence.

§ 11. Thus, in spite of theoretical citizenship in *natural* and *social* commonwealth, the Sage is driven back into himself. We are now approaching the most significant part of Marcus' Philosophy, — just that notable point of transition in which the influence of Plato supersedes that of Zeno and Chrysippus. Of extant authors in that age, Dio Chrysostomus is the last who preserves the somewhat narrow common-sense, the mental balance, the acquiescence in superficial verities, which we usually associate with Stoicism. Excluding Lucian, who like Voltaire had no originality, and belonged to no recognized school but that of opulent "bourgeois" respectability,—all the rest are tinged with mysticism: the sense of worlds undreamt-of by the vulgar, to which access was found through meditation or orgiastic cult. Aristides unites the beliefs of "Christian Science" with the study of nightly visions, that borderland of the soul in which two consciousnesses may be distinguished (see Von Drel's *Philosophy of Mysticism*), and the "astral body" be united to its cognate spirit, the Earth-Soul. Appuleius, like some allegorist of "Cinderella" and "Jack the Giant-killer," cleverly interweaves with a well-known romance certain significant episodes, as "Cupid and



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CHAPTER IV

HAPPINESS AND DESTINY OF MAN'S SPIRIT

(A) SELF-SUFFICINGNESS OF THE SOUL

ANALYSIS

§ 1. *The impregnable fastness of the Soul.*

§ 2. *Contentment with Self the supreme End; a self-centred peace; "our true, and intrinsic good cannot depend on another."*

§ 3. *Little success in convincing others of λόγος indwelling; average man prefers to be left to zest and uncertainty of old life.*

§ 4. *"Serenity" the unvarying aim of the Schools (various synonyms.*

§ 1. WE will first examine those passages in which he dwells on the "*Self-sufficingness*" of the conscious spirit; we shall then notice the unquestionably mystical language of certain sections, where we seem to be reading Plotinus a century before his time; and conclude the survey of the Doctrine of Man with a collection of those phrases which speak of the "Deity Within," and from the crude materialism of early Stoic identification of νοερόν πῦρ in Man and in God, elevate a system, more or less complete, of mystical Theology. "Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt"; similarly Marcus reproves himself for desiring artificial seclusion, ἀγροικίας κ. αἰγιαλοῦς κ. ὄρη . . ., when it is at any moment within our power to

retreat to the undisturbed fastness of our own soul, and there find a peace which passes understanding: *ἐξὸν ἧς ἀν ὧρας ἐθελήσης εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀναχωρεῖν· οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ οὔθ' ἡσυχιώτερον οὔτ' ἀπραγμονέστερον ἄνθρωπος ἀναχωρεῖ ἢ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, μάλισθ' ὅστις ἔχει ἔνδον τοιαῦτα εἰς ἃ ἐγκύψας ἐν πάσῃ εὐμαρείᾳ εὐθὺς γίνεται.* R.: "Nowhere can man find retirement more peaceful and untroubled than in his own soul; specially he who hath stores within, a glance at which straight-way sets him at perfect ease." For the soul is free if it will but recognise and claim its empire (one of independence rather than actual mastery), *οὐκ ἐπιμιγνύται λείως ἢ τράχεως κινουμένῳ πνεύματι* (pneumatic current of life and the vital emotions) *ἢ Διάνοια, ἐπειδὴν ἅπαξ ἑαυτὴν ἀπολάβῃ κ. γνώρισῃ τὴν ἰδίαν ἐξουσίαν.*—vii. 28: *Εἰς σαυτὸν συνειλοῦ.* *Φύσιν γὰρ ἔχει τὸ λογικὸν Ἡγεμονικὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀρκεῖσθαι δικαιοπραγοῦντι κ. παρ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο γαλήνην ἔχοντι.* The verb *ἀρκέω* in its impersonal neuter sense *ἀρκεῖ*, "it is enough, it suffices," is used in a technical sense about a dozen times of the "sufficiency" of things before us as an occasion (*ἀφορμὴ*) for moral action; but its chief technical use is in the passive, in which it refers to the contentment of soul with itself.—iii. 6. He gives himself full permission to follow the new Ideal, if he can discover anything better (*κρεῖττον*) than justice, truth, temperance, courage,—which he sums up as *καθάπαξ τοῦ ἀρκεῖσθαι ἑαυτῇ τὴν Διάνοιαν.*—iv. 25. Coupled with contentment with the apportioned lot is the truer and inward satisfaction of the man, *ἀρκουμένου τῇ ἰδίᾳ πράξει.* —iv. 32. He pities the foolish strivers of yesterday, dead and forgotten now, who "went after other gods," *ἀφέντας ποιεῖν τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν κατασκευὴν κ. τούτου*

ἄκριξ ἔχασθαι κ. τούτῳ ἀρκείσθαι.—v. 14: “Reason and the reasoning process are in themselves and their action self-sufficing faculties” (*δυνάμεις εἰσιν ἑαυταῖς ἀρκούμεναι*).

§ 2. He forgets, perhaps, that the exercise of the intellectual faculty is “its own reward,” if it in any way attain truth; whereas the soul cannot but mourn the ineffectiveness of moral effort. Doubt of the former does but lead to a scepticism which is far from unpleasing; but a sense of futility, however comforted by eulogy of the initial act of willing, cannot but lead in the other sphere to pessimism.—vii. 66. We must ask if Socrates was then content (*εἰ ἐδύνατο ἀρκείσθαι τῷ δίκαιος εἶναι κτλ.*—The word, pregnant with a technical meaning, occurs six times in the Eighth Book, of which the more interesting are § 7, *Ἀρκεῖται πᾶσα φύσις ἑαυτῇ εὐδοούση.*—§ 45 (already quoted), the deity within *ἀρκούμενος*, “if it can feel and act after the ordering of its own constitution.” R.—§ 48: *Ἀκαταμάχητον γίνεται τὸ Ἡγεμονικὸν ὅταν εἰς ἑαυτὸ συστραφὲν ἀρκέσθῃ ἑαυτῷ;* The Self-sufficing Soul invincible.—ix. 26: *Ἀνέτλης μύρια διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀρκείσθαι τῷ σῶ Ἡγεμονικῷ, ποιοῦντι ταῦτα εἰς ἃ κατεσκευάσται.*—ix. 42: *Οὐκ ἀρκεῖ τούτῳ ὅτι κατὰ φύσιν τήν σήν τι ἔπραξας ἀλλὰ τούτου μίσθον ζητεῖς; ὡς εἰ ὁ ὀφθαλμὸς ἀμοιβὴν ἀπῆτει ὅτι βλέπει.* There is nothing beyond the performance of the individual act in accordance with eternal “dogmata”; there is no recompense here or elsewhere; but, what is far more dispiriting, there is no real assurance that the Right will ultimately prevail;—for by the very terms of his creed Marcus cannot put off to some future time in a gradual process (to which even his poor actions could contribute) a



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what *you* is this true?' 'Of Reason.' 'But Reason and I are not the same.' Very good; then spare Reason (?) the pain of giving itself pain; and if some other part of you is amiss, let it keep that view to itself" (ἐὰν ἀφέλης τὴν σὴν ὑπόληψιν . . . αὐτὸς ἐν ἀσφαλεστάτῳ ἔστηκας—Τίς αὐτὸς;—ὁ Λόγος—'ΑΛΛ' οὐκ εἶμι λόγος.—^{*}Ἐστω κτλ. Here is a difficulty and a new feature in Stoicism. Aurelius, like all mystics, identifies his real self with an attenuated spiritual and divine principle which has nothing in common with human interests. Now the average man refuses to consider himself in the light of an "organ of impersonal Reason," or as a character in someone else's dream.¹ The whole relation of this *Noûs θυραθὲν εἰσίων* to the complex human framework, where it is for a time and to no purpose imprisoned, is beset with doubts and problems. We shall have to examine, when we approach the Universe from the objective side, the passages in which Marcus in *theory* recognises the monopsychism, which in his *practice* he so clearly rejects. Now, what is this *Λόγος* in the other man, of whose very presence he is unconscious? "Perchance he sleepeth, and must be awaked." A divine indwelling, but solely in potentiality (*δυνάμει*), and in the vast majority of men never reaching efficiency,—a puzzling and, perhaps, useless belief. The nature of man tends to break up from the popular dualism of soul and body into a number of distinct parts,—the six or seven selves of Indian mysticism,—the *Ἡγεμονικόν*, the *Dianœa*, the *Λόγος*, the Soul, which every now and again have a sharp contrast of outline, though we know very well they are in the end identical:—and

¹ See the last scene in *Alice through the Looking-Glass*.

most difficult of all—the constant representation of the Soul “as the pious vergier of an Idol in an unspotted Temple,”—an “Ion” without his unreflecting joyousness. The question still remains, “What is a particle of God doing in that unpromising dungeon?” Is it true even with the Pantheist that the source of life attains “*self-consciousness*” in man? Is it not true that it only reaches this doubtful blessing in the rare and infrequent Sage,—who then, mouthpiece of the Almighty or his very self, unhesitatingly condemns the Cosmic Process as cruel and meaningless? Yet for the average man, happy in his delusion, it retains its charm and zest. The feud between Philosophy and the people of which Plato spoke, in its new phase of “*Science versus Democracy*,” bids fair to be perennial.

§ 4. We return to simpler topics. viii. 28: ‘Ὁ πόνος ἦτοι τῷ σώματι κακόν· οὐκοῦν ἀποφαινέσθω. ἡ τῇ ψυχῇ· ἀλλ’ ἔξεστιν αὐτῇ τὴν ἰδίαν αἰθρίαν κ. γαλήνην διαφυλάσσειν κ. μὴ ὑπολαμβάνειν ὅτι κακόν. Πᾶσα γὰρ κρίσις κ. ὄρμη κ. ὄρεξις κ. ἔκκλισις ἔνδον κ. οὐδὲν κακόν ὧδ’ ἀναβαίνει.—ix. 13: ἐξέβαλον πᾶσαν περιστάσιν (he corrects the words ἐξῆλθον, because ἔξω οὐκ ἦν ἀλλ’ ἔνδον ἐν ταῖς ὑπολήψεσι). So 32: πολλὰ περισσὰ περιελεῖν τῶν ἐνοχλούντων σοι δύνασαι, ὅλα ἐπὶ τῇ ὑπόληψει σου κειμένα.—The same is true of other men’s unkind actions; they have no real objective existence, and exist in and harm only their souls, being no concern of ours; xi. 18 (7): οὐχ αἱ πράξεις αὐτῶν ἐνοχλοῦσιν ἡμῖν· ἐκεῖναι γὰρ εἰ. ἐν τοῖς ἐκείνων ἡγεμονικοῖς, ἀλλ’ αἱ ἡμετέραι ὑπολήψεις.—xii. 8. Among maxims and definitions, he reminds himself ὅτι πάντα ὑπόληψις; so 22, 26: “Ὅτι πάντα ὑπόληψις· κ. αὕτη ἐπὶ σοι. Ἄρου οὖν ὅτε θέλεις τὴν ὑπόληψιν, κ. ὥσπερ καμψάντι τὴν ἄκραν,

γαλήνη σταθερὰ πάντα κ. κόλπος ἀκύμων (a beautiful passage though the ὅτε θέλεις is untrue to the experience of most men ; which Rendall thus translates : “ The *view* taken is everything, and that rests with yourself. Disown the view at will ; and behold the headland rounded, there is calm, still water, and a waveless bay ”). So 25 : Βάλε ἔξω τὴν ὑπόληψιν, κ. σέσωσαι ! There’s nothing outside corresponding to your fears, hopes, anxieties.

The words used to convey this imperturbable serenity, single point of equilibrium and permanence, in an unstable and dissolving world,—are mostly common to other Stoic writers, though Marcus inserts some of his own. Above all, he delights to employ the terms of Hedonism, as religious writers sometimes seem to profane heavenly raptures by the similes of earthly love. As Seneca borrows his texts for the Lucilian sermons from Epicurus, so Marcus takes from the Cyrenaic school of sensationalism the language of voluptuous enjoyment. One term in very general use, ἀταραξία, he uses once only (just as αὐτάρκεια and εὐδαιμονία occur but once) : αἰθρία, γαλήνη, ἀλυπία, τὸ ἀπαιθριάσαι (“ gain unclouded calm,” ii. 4), εὐζωεῖν, εὐθυμία (a Democritean word), εὐμάρεια, εὐμοιρία, εὐοδία, and εὐοδεῖν several times, εὐρους and εὐροεῖν, εὐρυχωρία (recalling the Psalm : “ Thou hast set my feet in a large room ”), εὐσταθεῖν, εὐσχολεῖν, εὐφροσύνη, and εὐφραίνειν often.—x. 1. A unique instance, ἡσθήση is used in a good sense, and coupled with ἀρκεσθήση, and in same section where ἡδονὴ is used in its invariably *bad* sense ; for in twenty-three places it is that which the good man shuns and the vulgar identify with the Good) θυμηδία (in good sense), σωτηρία, ὑγίεια, φαιδρύνειν : while ἀπολαύειν is used now of lower pleasures ; iii. 6 :



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ἄνθρωπος. (The Will, the Power within which pulls the wires in life's puppet show.)

(B) MYSTICAL TENDENCIES AND THE DOCTRINE OF
"DEITY WITHIN"

ANALYSIS

§ 5. *Soul as a "self-rounded sphere"; as an Emanation from God; as a Dæmon within.*

§ 5. This preoccupation with the interior disposition issues in vague mystical language, like later Platonic rhapsodies; xi. 12 is, perhaps, the most notable passage: "The soul becomes a 'self-rounded sphere' when it neither strains outward nor contracts inward by self-constriction and compression, but shines with the light by which it sees all truth without and truth within." *Σφαῖρα ψυχῆς αὐτοείδης ὅταν μήτ' ἐκτείνηται ἐπί τι μήτ' ἔσω συντρέχη μήτε σπείρηται μήτε συνιζάνη ἀλλὰ φωτὶ λάμπηται, ᾧ τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὁρᾷ τὴν Πάντων κ. τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ.* So viii. 41: "Ὅταν γένηται σφαῖρος κυκλοτερῆς μένει (where R.: "The freehold of the Mind none other may contravene . . . so long as it abides 'poised as a sphere self-orbed'").—xii. 2: "God sees men's Inner Selves stripped of their material shells and husks and impurities. Mind to mind, His mental being touches only the like elements in us derivative from Him." *Ὁ θεὸς πάντα τὰ ἡγεμονικὰ γυμνὰ τῶν ὑλικῶν ἀγγείων κ. φλοίων κ. καθαρμάτων ὁρᾷ. Μόνῳ γὰρ τῷ Ἐαυτοῦ νοερῷ μόνῳ ἀπτεται τῶν ἐξ Ἐαυτοῦ εἰς ταῦτα ἐρρυηκότων κ. ἀπωχετευμένων.* We have now reached the final stage, when the soul of man is definitely pronounced not merely Divine, but a part of

God's very essence; the remaining passages need no comment, they speak for themselves; and we may remember that in Marcus' lips these words are no trivial or idle metaphor as in early Stoicism, but the profoundest truth.—ii. 1: *θείας ἀπομοίρας μέτοχος*.—4: *δεῖ αἰσθέσθαι τίνος διοικοῦντος τὸν Κόσμον ἀπόρροια ὑπέστης*.—13: *ἀρκεῖ πρὸς μόνῳ τῷ ἔνδον ἑαυτοῦ Δαίμονι εἶναι*.—ii. 12. Reason's part it is to consider *πῶς ἄπτεται θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος κ. κατὰ τί ἑαυτοῦ μέρος κ. ὅταν πῶς διακέηται τὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦτο μόνιον*. These reservations are entirely out of place in any monistic system; still more in a scheme of *materialistic* monism. "Every part of man touched God, for God was all." The indifferent Gnostic was far more logical in his doctrine of the uncontaminated indwelling of the divine spirit quite irrespective of any act of the animal complex. The companionship was never riven apart. We can see how the Emperor, for all his theory of unity and acquiescence, trembles on the brink of a dualism so unabashed that mysticism becomes the only remedy.—17: (*φιλοσοφία*) *ἐν τῷ τηρεῖν τὸν ἔνδον Δαίμονα . . . ἀσινῆ*.—iii. 3: *Τὸ μὲν γὰρ νοῦς κ. Δαίμων, τὸ δὲ γῆ κ. λύθρος*.—iii. 4: *Ἱερεὺς τις . . . κ. ὑποῦργος θεῶν, χρώμενος κ. τῷ ἔνδον ἰδρυμένῳ αὐτοῦ (= priest and minister of the Gods, using also as some sacred oracular shrine that deity planted in his breast; Saint Cadog's definition of conscience, "eye of God in the soul of man.")*—iii. 5: *ὁ ἐν σοὶ θεὸς ἔστω προστάτης*.—iii. 6: *τοῦ ἐνιδρυμένου ἐν σοὶ Δαίμονος . . . ὁ γὰρ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ νοῦν κ. Δαίμονα (= iii. 3) . . . προελόμενος . . . οὐ στενάζει*.—iii. 12: *Τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Δαίμονα καθαρὸν ἐστῶτα τηρεῖν*.—iii. 16: *Τὸν δὲ ἔνδον ἐν τῷ στήθει ἰδρυμένον Δαίμονα μὴ φύρειν . . . ἀλλὰ ἴλεων διατηρεῖν*.—v. 10:

οὐδείς ὁ ἀναγκάσων τοῦτον παραβῆναι (= τὸν ἐμὸν θεὸν κ. Δαίμονα).—v. 21 : τῶν ἐν σοὶ τὸ κράτιστον τίμα· ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ Ἐκείνω ὁμογενές.—v. 27 : ψυχὴν . . . ποιούσαν ὅσα βούλεται ὁ Δαίμων ὃν ἐκάστῳ προστάτην (= iii. 5) κ. ἡγέμονα ὃ Ζεὺς ἔδωκεν, ἀπόσπασμα ἑαυτοῦ.—viii. 7 : Ἡ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου φύσις μέρος ἐστὶν ἀνεμποδίστου Φύσεως κ. νοερᾶς κ. δικαίας.—viii. 45 : ἔξω τὸν ἐμὸν Δαίμονα ἴλεων (= satisfied, ἀρκοῦμενον).—xi. 19 : τοῦτο ἡττωμένου . . . τοῦ ἐν σοὶ θειοτέρου μέρους τῆ ἀτιμωτέρας κ. θνητῆ μοίρας.—xii. 1 : ἐὰν τὸ ἐν σοὶ Θεῖον τιμῆσης.—xii. 2 : Souls τῶν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ . . . ἐρρύηκόντων κ. ἀπωχετευμένων.—xii. 3 : ἴλεως τῷ σαυτοῦ Δαίμονι διαβιῶναι.—23 : Οὕτω γὰρ κ. θεοφόρητος ὁ φερόμενος κατὰ ταῦτὰ θεῷ. R. : “vessel of God” (cf. viii. 2 : ἰσονόμος θεῷ).—xii. 26 : ὁ ἐκάστου νοῦς θεὸς κ. ἐκείθεν ἐρρύηκεν.

(C) THE PROBLEM OF MONOPSYCHISM

ANALYSIS

§ 6. “Solidarity of Soul-nature”; all from νοερὸν to which man has “inlet” at will (Emerson).

§ 7. Averroism and its problems; “how can the true self be identified with this alien portion of God?”

§ 6. We have now to consider (1) the strange problem of *Monopsychism* already hinted at; and (2) the ultimate destiny of the (so-called) individual soul after death. We note the “indifference” of other men’s souls clearly set forth in viii. 56 : Τῷ ἐμῷ προαιρετικῷ τὸ τοῦ πλησίον προαιρετικὸν ἐπίσης ἀδιάφορον ἐστὶν, just as his tiny vital force and poor flesh. Καὶ γὰρ εἰ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀλλήλων ἔνεκεν γεγό-



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than this? (to use an inaccurate but convenient expression): *Εἰς μὲν τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα μία ψυχὴ διήρηται εἰς δὲ τὰ λογικὰ μία νοερὰ ψυχὴ μεμέρισται,—ὡσπερ κ. μία γῆ ἐστὶν ἀπάντων τῶν γεωδῶν κ. ἐνὶ φωτὶ ὁρῶμεν κ. ἓνα ἀέρα ἀναπνέομεν.* (R.: "The Soul distributed among the irrational animals is *one*, and so too the Soul instinct with mind, that is portioned out among 'the rational; just as earth is *one* in all things earthly, and the light *one* by which we see, the air *one* which we breathe.") Again, ix. 39: [*Ἦτοι*] ἀπὸ μιᾶς πηγῆς νοερᾶς πάντα ὡς ἐνὶ σώματι ἐπισυμβαίνει. (" [Either] All things spring from a single source possessed of mind, and combine and fit together as for a single body.") Although cast in the form of an alternative, Marcus clearly here sets forth his personal faith. In another statement of alternatives, *ἤτοι σκεδασμὸς . . . ἢ τροπὴ* (x. 7), he uses absorptionist language; but it is not clear whether he here wishes to express the resumption of the *logical* as well as the *physical* part of his nature; though, as he cannot *exclude*, he may well be supposed to *include* ὥστε κ. ταῦτα ἀναληφθῆναι εἰς τὸν τοῦ ὅλου Λόγον εἴτε κατὰ περίοδον ἐκπυρουμένου εἴτ' αἰδίῳ ἀμοιβαῖς ἀνανευμένου.—Similarly 14, he speaks of τῇ πάντα διδούσῃ κ. ἀπολαμβάνουσῃ Φύσει.

§ 7. xii. 2. The souls are, as we saw, spoken of as flowing forth from God, like the several channels all owing origin to some fount or lake (ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ ἐρρύηκότα and ἀπωχετευμένα),—just as § 26, ἐκείθεν ἐρρύηκε. So in xii. 32 apportionment of tiny piece of time, substance, soul, to each, πόστον δὲ τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας (ἀπομεμέρισται ἐκάστῳ); πόστον δὲ τῆς ὅλης ψυχῆς; where he seems to include the *vivific* and the

intelligent principle; though it might be maintained that he meant the former alone, and that for the *νοῦς*, he reverted to the old legend of a guardian angel, set apart to each by Zeus, a distinct being, *κυρίως σὸν*; but other passages display impartially the other and contradictory view. So it becomes difficult to see how (xii. 3) the third element in man, this very *νοῦς*, which is itself a God (*θεὸς*), can be *μόνον κυρίως σὸν*; especially if we find these words at the close of the book; § 30: “*Ἐν φῶς ἡλίου, καὶ διείργηται τοίχοις ὄρεσιν ἄλλοις μυρίοις. Μία οὐσία κοινὴ καὶ διείργηται ἰδίως ποιοῖς σώμασι μυρίοις. Μία ψυχὴ καὶ φύσει δ. μυρίαὶς κ. ἰδίαις περιγραφαῖς. Μία νοερά ψυχὴ καὶ διακεκρίσθαι δοκῆ.*” “Now the rest of things though one in origin are *ἀναίσθητα* and *ἀνοικειωτ’ ἀλλήλοις*; they are held together by the Central Principle (*τὸ νοοῦν*) and by—gravitation (! *τὸ ἐπὶ ταῦτὰ βρῖθον*), *Διάνοια δὲ ἰδίως ἐπὶ τὸ ὁμόφυλον τείνεται κ. συνίσταται κ. οὐ διείργεται τὸ κοινωνικὸν πάθος* (instinct of association or community cannot be held apart).” But this is clearly a Counsel of Perfection, in a better world; it is not Marcus’ concrete experience, which tells him that he has nothing in common with other men except a sympathy and compassion, all on his side and unrequited after all.

(D) IMMORTALITY

ANALYSIS

§ 8. *Close connexion with preceding problem of individ. and univers. soul; whether souls survive or not, indifferent to moral duty.*

§ 9. *Soul “capax æterni” but not therefore eternal; world’s interest to dissolve and rearrange; extinction or transference?*

§ 10. (*Texts illustrating his doubt of personal survival.*)

§ 11. *Pessimistic scorn of Immortality.*

§ 12. "If the gods could have bestowed it, they would have" (= a complete justification and Theodicy).

§ 13. *Marcus, however sceptical, feels himself safe with the Higher Powers.*

§ 8. The same problems as to the relation of *individual* and *universal* Soul wait around the question of *Immortality*. It is interesting to notice that of these ultimate and metaphysical points, "God, freedom, immortality,"—the Stoic pronounced *ex cathedra* upon the second alone. Certainty, except in the one fact of moral liberty, was no part of the later Stoical development. Every question is posited as an alternative; whether the world is ruled by Providence, or whether there is a mere "Welter" (*κυκεών*), cannot possibly concern my nature, which as rational and self-determining can only find the end of its being in moral action.¹ So, whether Souls survive or not, affects in no degree my principles (*δόγματα*) of life's duties. Like Kant, Seneca Epictetus and Marcus seem to agree in subordinating *speculative* certainty; the *practical* problem was no problem to them. And the stimulus to this was probably the same in all; a quite personal or instinctive prejudice in favour of a course of conduct for which the arguments are by no means conclusive. Kant preferred to talk loftily of "Duty" (whatever meaning he attached to the idea); while the Roman philosophers, with Hellenic sobriety and self-centred common

¹ ix. 28: Τὸ δὲ "Ὄλον εἶτε Θεός, εὔ ἔχει πάντα ("All's well with the world") εἶτε τὸ εἰκῆ, μὴ καὶ σὺ εἰκῆ.—xii. 14 (quoted in full elsewhere), εἰ φυρμὸς ἀνηγεμόνευτος, ἀσμενίζε ὅτι ἐν τοιούτῳ κλύδωνι αὐτὸς ἔχεις ἐν σαυτῷ τινα νοῦν ἡγεμονικόν,—which may be a sublime defence, but is very illogical.



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the world's interest; as it freshens itself by altering and rearranging atoms, and thus brings birth of new creatures from the death of others. From this law why should man alone claim exemption?—v. 33: *Τί οὖν ἔτι τὸ ἐνταῦθα κατέχον*; sensibles and sense are unreal and fallacious: *αὐτὸ δὲ τὸ ψυχάριον ἀναθυμίασις ἀφ' αἵματος*. Has he forgotten in this materialism the high affinity claimed for spirit? or is this not to include the sublimer element set free by death? The moral is *περιμένειν ἴλῳ τὴν εἴτε σβέσιν εἴτε μετάστασιν* (“serenely to await the end, be it *extinction* or *transmutation*”). Death is the great leveller.—vi. 24: (Alexander and his stable-boy on a par) *ἦτοι γὰρ ἐλήφθησαν εἰς τοὺς αὐτοὺς τοῦ Κόσμου σπερματικούς λόγους· ἢ διεσκεδάσθησαν ὁμοίως εἰς τὰς ἀτόμους*: the Stoic and the Epicurean account; it is difficult to see wherein consists the superiority of first over second.—So vii. 32: *Περὶ θανάτου· ἢ σκεδασμός εἰ ἄτομοι, εἰ δ' ἔνωσις, ἦτοι σβέσις ἢ μετάστασις*.—vii. 50. After quoting with approval Euripides' “Chrysippus,” Growth of earth returns to earth; || Seeds that spring of heavenly birth || To heavenly realms anon revert—*τοῦτο διάλυσις τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀτόμοις ἀντεμπλοκῶν, κ. τοιοῦτός τις σκορπισμός τῶν ἀπαθῶν στοιχείων* (“dissolution of the atomic combinations and consequent scattering of the impassive elements”). Here Marcus is a complete Lucretian for the nonce.—vi. 28. Death ends not merely sensation and appetite, but is also *ἀνάπαυλα . . . διανοητικῆς διεξόδου*, where Rendall's “searchings of thought” suggests, perhaps, to a casual reader, rather the ceasing of anxiety than the extinction of conscious thought altogether, which I take to be Marcus' meaning.—vii. 10. First let us note Marcus' consistent dualism

of *substrate* and *cause* (ἔνυλον . . . αἰτιῶδες, or as here, αἴτιον): Πᾶν τὸ ἔνυλον ἐναφανίζεται τάχιστα τῇ τῶν Ὀλων οὐσίᾳ, κ. πᾶν αἴτιον εἰς τὸν τῶν Ὀλων Λόγον τάχιστα ἀπολαμβάνεται,—and we cannot doubt that ψυχὴ is included in αἴτια. (R. : “every cause is quickly reassumed into the Universal Reason.”)—viii. 25 : δεήσει ἢτοι σκεδασθῆναι τὸ συγκριμάτιόν σου ἢ σβεσθῆναι τὸ πνευματίον ἢ μεταστῆναι κ. ἀλλαχοῦ καταταχθῆναι. (“Either your mortal compound must be dispersed into its Atoms, or else the breath of life must be extinguished, or be transmuted and enter a new order.”)¹

§ 10. We may note that it is *just* possible to give a slightly more personal and hopeful meaning here, though, on the whole, I believe Dr. Rendall's translation gives the true sense ; “transferred to another command, and be set on duty in another sphere.”—iii. 3. Comparing life to a voyage, and marvelling at the reluctance of passenger to disembark, although he has reached his destination ; τί ταῦτα ; ἐνέβης ἔπλευσας κατήχθης· ἔκβηθι. Εἰ μὲν ἐφ' ἕτερον βίον, οὐδὲν θεῶν κένον οὐδὲ ἐκεῖ· εἰ δὲ ἐν ἀναισθησίᾳ παύση . . . ἀνεχόμενος κ. λατρεύων.—To this *possible* interpretation § 58 lends some countenance : Ὁ τὸν θάνατον φοβούμενος, ἢτοι ἀναισθησίαν φοβεῖται ἢ αἴσθησιν ἕτεροίαν. Ἄλλ' εἴτε οὐκέτι, οὐδὲ κακοῦ τινος αἰσθήση (“no pain in death, for it implies extinction of percipience,” the teaching of all the Dissolutionists) ; εἴτε ἀλλοιοτέραν αἴσθησιν

¹ Cf. Herbert Spencer in his latest work, *Facts and Comments* : “What becomes of consciousness when it ends? We can only infer that it is a specialized and individualized form of that Infinite and Eternal Energy which transcends both our knowledge and our imagination ; and that at death its elements lapse into the Infinite and Eternal Energy whence they were derived.”

κτήση, ἀλλοίου ζῶον ἔση κ. τοῦ ζῆν οὐ παύση. This may mean mere transmigration of the vital energy into other animals' bodies; or it may imply continuance of the consciousness. ("If sensation is changed in kind, you will be a changed creature, and will not cease to live.") But though it is (with iii. 3) the most decided passage we have yet encountered, a survival of something in another phase of existence,—we may certainly wonder that, with his peculiar theories, he chooses the low word *αἴσθησις* to express that in man which rises superior to death!—I will merely quote ix. 36: τὸ πνευματικὸν (? with Casaubon πνευματίον) ἄλλο τοιοῦτον ἐκ τούτων εἰς ταῦτα μεταβάλλον: the vital or pneumatic current flits from body to body, quickening now one, now another of these congeries.—That the whole series of passages merely implies the indestructibility, as of matter, so of vital force, receives weighty confirmation from our next.—x. 7: Ἡτοι γὰρ σκεδασμὸς στοιχείων ἐξ ὧν συνεκρίθην (so viii. 25) ἡ τροπή τοῦ μὲν στερεμνίου εἰς τὸ γεῶδες τοῦ δὲ πνευματικοῦ (here Casaubon is silent) εἰς τὸ ἀερῶδες ὥστε κ. ταῦτα ἀναληφθῆναι εἰς τὸν τοῦ ὅλου Λόγον (whether it suffer "Ragnarök" at stated intervals or renew its youth with perpetual change). He continues significantly and in quite a modern spirit. R.: "Do not regard the solid or the pneumatic elements as a natal part of being; they are but accretions of yesterday or the day before, derived from food and respiration." Now clearly in such a passage he says nothing about the *νοῦς* or the *Δαίμων* (whether as identical or distinct). Perhaps *νοῦς* without this material envelope and vital current to which it is strongly attached, loses all its definiteness, and sinks back, mere logical abstract truth, into the



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committed to the grave? Just as on earth, after a certain term of survival (*πρὸς ἤντινα ἐπιδιαμονήν*), change and dissolution of substance makes room for other dead bodies (*μεταβολή κ. διάλυσις*); so, too, the souls, transmuted into air after a period of survival, change by processes of diffusion and ignition, and are resumed into the seminal principle of the universe, and in this way make room for others to take up their habitation in their stead" (*εἰς τὸν ἀέρα μεθιστάμεναι . . . ἐπὶ ποσὸν συμμίνασαι μεταβάλλουσι κ. χέονται κ. ἐξάπτονται εἰς τὸν τῶν Ὁλων σπερματικὸν Λόγον ἀναλαμβάνομεναι . . . χώραν ταῖς προσσυνοικιζομέναις παρέχουσι*). "Such is the natural answer, assuming the survival of Souls, ἐφ' ὑποθέσει τοῦ τὰς ψυχὰς διαμένειν." He is strictly impartial here, and settles with a logical answer a purely logical conundrum; but it may be noted that even in the more favourable "hypothesis," as he terms it, the souls of the righteous only last a short time, and soon melt and dissolve into the Universal Reason; here at least Marcus is plainly "Averroistic."

§ 12. The final and by far the most important (and disappointing) passage is xii. 5: "How is it that the gods, who ordered all things well and lovingly, overlooked this one thing: that some men elect in virtue (having kept close covenant with the divine, and enjoyed intimate communion therewith by holy act and sacred ministries) should not, when once dead, renew their being, but be utterly extinguished?" (*Πῶς ποτὲ πάντα καλῶς κ. φιλανθρώπως διαταξάντες οἱ θεοὶ τοῦτο μόνον παρείδον,—τὸ ἐνίους . . . καὶ πανὺ χρηστοῦς κ. πλείστα πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ὡσπερ συμβόλαια θεμένους κ. ἐπὶ πλείστον δι' ἔργων ὀσίων κ. ἱεουργιῶν συνήθεις τῷ θεῷ γενομένους, ἐπειδὰν ἅπαξ ἀποθάνωσι, μηκέτι αὐθις*

γίνεσθαι, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ παντελὲς ἀπεσβηκέναι;) "If, indeed, it be so, be sure, had it been better otherwise (ἐτέρως ἔχειν ἔδει), the gods would have had it so. Were it *right*, it would be likewise *possible*. Were it according to nature, nature would have brought it to pass" (εἰ γὰρ δίκαιον ἦν, ἦν ἂν κ. δυνατὸν, κ. εἰ κατὰ φύσιν, ἤνεγκεν ἂν αὐτὸ ἡ Φύσις. Ἐκ δὲ τοῦ μὴ οὕτως ἔχειν, εἶπερ οὐχ οὕτως ἔχει), "From its not being so, *if as a fact it is not so*, be assured it ought not so to be (πιστούσθω τὸ μὴ δεῆσαι κτλ.). "Do you not see that in hazarding such questions you arraign the justice of God (δικαιολογῆ)? Nay, we could not thus reason with the gods but for their perfectness and justice" (οὐκ ἂν δ' οὕτω διελεγόμεθα τοῖς θεοῖς, εἰ μὴ ἄριστοι κ. δικαιοτάτοί εἰσιν).¹ Εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, οὐκ ἂν τι περιεῖδον ἀδικῶς κ. ἀλόγως ἡμελημένον τῶν ἐν τῇ διακοσμήσει: "And from this it follows that they never would have allowed any unjust or unreasonable neglect of parts of the great order." This is perhaps the most striking passage in the whole book, and demands now some consideration.

§ 13. We must not press down Marcus to a dogmatic statement; he is only concerned to vindicate the Divine goodness at all cost and under any condition or circumstance. "Whatever my experience or discovery in life may be, it shall not interfere with this belief of mine, whether it be instinctive or a scholastic maxim, learnt by heart at the beginning of my career." How nobly irrational is this prejudice in favour of a School thesis! There is no foundation for his belief except the formal

¹ Implying, I suppose, that we are indebted to them (1) for the faculty of criticizing reason, by which we can ungratefully impeach the Cosmic Process; (2) for their patience and long-suffering, by which they listen without anger to our murmurs.

sylogism of the Porch, by which you could prove anything and be none the wiser; and (here is the really redeeming feature) an unassailable personal conviction which has come to him in spite of the gloomy issue of his philosophic reflexion, that "God is gracious." Here is religious faith, very vague and very much entangled in a whole mass of pantheistic "credenda," but sincere, authentic, vital. And, with the right instinct of the Christian, he will at once sacrifice God's almightiness to His goodness; "perhaps the gods could not recall a man from the gates of death." This is implicit in the central part of the section. So J. S. Mill willingly abandons the more or less meaningless dogma of infinite power, because thereby he arouses the strongest emotion, the most redoubtable propaganda in the world of men, the spirit of chivalrous loyalty to a cause not yet won. Or, again, we may suppose that the gods are but the subordinate ministers and satellites of the *Timæus*, and that Nature antecedes their loving providence by a stern fiat separating the possible from the impossible. Whichever it may be, Marcus clearly feels himself "safe" in the hands of the higher powers. His reasoning is absurd to the last degree; not a single important word in the paragraph could retain its customary sense if he is allowed to argue in that stiff and formal manner; every definition evaporates into thin air. But who are we, to judge another man's faith, or penetrate into the sacred recesses of the inner temple? Suffice it that in this last great trial Marcus was tested in the furnace of God's abandonment, and was not found wanting; so unshaken was his belief, so triumphant his heart and character over the coldness, the inadequacy, of his philosophic creed.



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allow that morality is independent of a belief in a personal Creator and Judge. Moral behaviour, which resists the solvent of atheism,¹ could not possibly con-

¹ How completely independent the moral sanction is in Marcus' eye of any theological presupposition, is seen in vi. 44 : *Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐβουλεύσαντο περὶ ἐμοῦ κ. τῶν ἐμοὶ συμβῆναι ὀφειλόντων* (particular Providence) *καλῶς ἐβουλεύσαντο*. It is not easy, even for a moment, to imagine a god to be ἄβουλος, and for what cause should they want to harm me? . . . But if their providence was not special, but general, all follows in the unbending course of things, and I must be content (*ἀσπάζεσθαι κ. στέργειν ὀφείλω*). But there is yet a third possibility, the Epicurean hypothesis, *εἰ δ' ἄρα περὶ μηδένοσ βουλευόνται (πιστεύειν μὲν οὐχ ὄσιον)*. R. : "If, indeed, they take no thought for anything at all,—an impious creed,—then let us have done with sacrifice and prayer and oaths and all other observances by which we own the presence and the nearness of the gods" (*ὡς πρὸς παρόντας κ. συμβιοῦντας τοὺς θεούς*, going in and out amongst us). But if, after all, they take no thought for any concern of ours, then is man thrown back upon himself;—*ἐμοὶ μὲν ἔξεστι περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ βουλεύεσθαι ἐμοὶ δ' ἔστι σκέψις περὶ τοῦ συμφέροντος* (which, of course, is interpreted in wider sense—the weal of smaller or greater commonwealth, promoted by social *activity* and religious *quietism*).—x. 6. *Εἴτε ἄτομοι εἴτε Φύσις, πρῶτον κείσθω ὅτι μέρος εἰμι τοῦ Ὀλοῦ ὑπὸ φύσεωσ διοικουμένου ἔπειτα ὅτι ἔχω πως οἰκείωσ πρὸς τὰ ὁμογενῆ μέρη*. (R. : "Be the word atoms, or be it nature's growth, stand assured, first, that I am a part of the whole at nature's disposition (?); secondly, that I am related to all my kindred parts.") Certainly *φύσεωσ* is odd; an alternative is propounded, and its solution pronounced immaterial, or at least subsequent and secondary to certain immovable axioms; and yet, on closer survey, we find these reposing upon acceptance of *one* hypothesis (as in the *Theætetus*, where the very word under discussion creeps stealthily into its own definition!). Nor does the suggestion *διοικούμενοσ* help us much, though clearly a man might recognise a sort of purpose or end in his own nature, while refusing to see in the world without anything but the play of accidental and unconsoious forces. Marcus is not one of such dualists; in the reason *within* he sees irrefragable testimony to the ordering mind *without*, though he carefully fortifies himself against the other contingency. For ethics must be absolutely emancipated from presupposition, must depend solely on a man's consciousness, sense of the fitting, artistic proportion (as in so much of Hellenic morality), exhaustion of all other remedies for the restlessness and pangs of life (*πεπείρασαι ποσὰ πλανηθεῖσ!*).

front the *certainty* of dissolution. The whole attitude to life would be so transformed that a new series of eudæmonistic maxims or suicidal appeals would arise to meet this moral certainty,—that man was an animal who had gone astray from Eden, cursed with the last terrible imprecation of a secret but malignant power,—in a word, *rational*; that faculty in us which halves our pleasures and doubles our pains. The civic code of respectable convention and reciprocity would struggle in vain against this conviction; and fanaticism or superstition alone could reconstruct the shattered fabric of society, or mount guard over the security of the weak and the rights of private property. Nay, the popular voice, always on the side of conservatism and approved friends, might rise in angry and indignant clamour against those shorteners of life as they dealt their hope a deathblow. A tumult followed the elimination of eleven days; what might we not expect to be the fate of the scientist who could disprove beyond a doubt the survival of the Soul?

§ 15. But here is the point of interest: this is quite unlikely,—regarding the matter in historic probability. The signs of the times, the arguments of the wise, the eager curiosity of society, are all telling the other way. The massive weight of cumulative democratic testimony is heavy in the balance; for nearly half the human race there is no God, but the soul is indestructible, creating its own recompense, passing verdict on itself, shaping its unending destiny. It is quite conceivable that man's Soul may be immortal, but that there is no power in the universe (beyond the unknown and unconscious ground) to which the name of God and the attributes of religious worship can apply. A Society founded on

the one hypothesis we see in the Buddhistic community of sympathy and compassion, by no means nihilistic or unethic; there is nothing in such tenets to countenance rebellion or the overthrow of the moral law. But a Society founded on the sense of the unreality of what we term Soul, the illusion of personality, is not only inconceivable, it is contrary to the experience of all human history. Marcus did not think so: but he wrote to comfort himself; he could not have expected that his arguments could appeal as rational or sober to any of his contemporaries, or to the average man. His subjective resignation comes of strongest faith, which his intellectual scepticism cannot overthrow.

APPENDIX

ANALYSIS

- A. *No definite pronouncement or even unmistakable tendency; only concerned to show morals is indifferent to such speculations.*
- B. *No metaphysic, only a doglike fidelity to Duty (he wavers between physical fatalism and religion).*
- C. *No doubt his ultimate personal hope; "the soul released would rejoin the gods."*

A. I cannot, I fear, entirely assent to Dr. Rendall's interpretation of the Emperor's views on Immortality, which is the ultimate problem. To me he is not the dogmatist in science or theology which his translator believes. The sometimes interminable series of "seu" or "sive" in Roman poets, the heaping-up of possible explanations of phenomena (such as the Nile's rising), without giving any view or opinion priority, seems to point to a wholesome suspension of judgment thus



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cases. His whole concern is to show the *independence* and *autonomy* of the *moral judgment*. His scientific or dogmatic knowledge is *always* cast in this sceptical form. He quite sufficiently guards himself from any definite decision.

B. To use the word "conviction" in any context but the moral sense, is misleading. By all means, his predilection is for an ordered world, the existence of gods, even their providential care, if not of particular, at least of general laws; and for a Soul, a re-assumption into that reservoir of Soul-life (a belief which we connect with the term "Averroism"). But he certainly will not dogmatize; he has passed through and abandoned the phase of eager science; he grasps in his intellectual survey not the uses but the vanity of things;—their incredible meanness when analysed into their elements; his *φυσιολογία* is moral and reacts on self, not scientific and objective. He has in effect no metaphysic; only a dog-like allegiance to this inward sense of duty, which has spoilt his life, setting him on a peak of loneliness aloof from earthly pleasures and amiable illusions, away from his fellow-men. And those one day, gathering round his dying bed, will say, "Now we have got rid at last of our pedagogue!" He does not see that his indifference to such questions (if it was not assumed), his emphasis on the "good will alone being unreservedly good," — places him for the ordinary man in a position utterly illogical. Why this unswerving loyalty to a principle? The "final triumph of the right," or any "far-off divine event," are meaningless phrases to this apostle of the "Eternal Now." I quite admit the instinctive courage and self-devotion of a martyr to a cause,—say, the regeneration of mankind through Nihilism, "in sure and certain hope," as Tourguenieff so pathetically describes, of personal ruin here and extinction hereafter. But idealism (as emotion and a wager of hardihood or defiance) will do wonders in reinforcing the moral instinct (as the craving for martyrdom); and Marcus had no trace of this. The "good soul" may very

likely vanish and be as if it never had been. (οὐδαμοῦ ἢ οὐπόδῃ, the invariable loophole of evasion.) And there is no cause at all in the world for men to fight for; everything is at once divine, monotonous, and predestined before all the ages: to struggle is *impious* in the theologic, *useless* in the scientific sphere. "There remain passages," says Dr. Rendall, "in which other views are broached, and which some have interpreted as a wavering back on hope, inconsistent with his philosophic creed." To my eyes this is precisely the significant feature of the book; the contest between this *religious* and this *materialistic* or *fatalistic* conception of the Universe.

C. His profound belief in Divine interposition in the lives of individuals (see i. 17, "help vouchsafed by dreams") is not only clearly stated in the commentaries, once or twice, but is corroborated in all his correspondence with Fronto. He uses it sparingly here, because his mind wants reinforcing against the doubts and suspicion of the world and its goodness, creeping in through the "joints of his Stoical harness,"—which assuredly he seems sometimes not "to have proved." His real weapons, his few pebbles for slaying giant Despair, certainly come from no intellectual armoury, but from the early training, the immovable conviction and insight of a loving and sympathetic nature, great in spite of his creed. I conceive that ultimately Marcus believed that the soul of the wise joined the gods, whatever meaning he attached to this expression. Christians to-day recognize the extreme hazard of defining a future life; some desire eternal rest; some continued work, to be "ruler over ten cities," or to "sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel"; others (perhaps a majority of the human race) look upon the extinction of consciousness as a final blessing, too great to be hastily grasped, but to be patiently won through repeated pangs of rebirth. It is inconceivable that Marcus could have believed the Ruling Principle, the Inner Self, the God Within, to disperse into thin air. On what could he found the

superiority of man to the beast? If this colourless absorption into Mind again seems but a poor travesty of an immortal hope, let us at least not find fault with Marcus. He believed "the soul returned to God who gave it"; and not one of us to-day can say more. "He whom the gods lent us, has rejoined the gods."



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ὁ κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κείται) and his reverence for the divine spark, and his depreciation of human life and nature are distinctly Basilidian or Valentinian,—fundamentally dualistic. As with man's soul, alien sojourner in a contemptible framework of corruption,—so with the Supreme Power. It is hard to reconcile the praise of God with the scorn of the visible Universe which embodies Him. In what part of the world, in what corner of Nature can He reside, where all is pitiable or disgusting? Has he a foothold any more secure in the realm of History or Time? Marcus' contempt of *Time* is perhaps even more striking than his dislike of *Matter*: and yet, by the very terms of his hypothesis, God reigns supreme in both departments, and is so far from merely guiding or superintending a somewhat stubborn and indocile complex,—is substantially identical with it. Marcus Aurelius is not the first philosopher who has thrown the black cloak of Monism over a militant and meaningless array of particulars. The Canonists of mediæval times when egoism was rampant unrestrained, and central authority or national cohesion unknown, elevate the pretensions of the universal sovereign of the Christian Republic,—Pope or Emperor; and the grandeur of their attributes varies in exact proportion to the inefficiency of their control. A pessimistic disillusion with each fragment of life and its ideals, love, ambition, knowledge—seems to lead surely to an unwarrantable deification of the whole; the illusion of "Sorites" in which at a certain point the sum of despised particulars becomes somehow Divine. Nothing is more remarkable than the course of that School, which, beginning with rejection of the "Will-to-live," culminates in the mystical resignation

of Von Hartmann. Pietism, like the sympathetic instinct at the root of practical morality, is deeply engrained in the heart; while the obvious folly of rebellion lends the sanction of utility and personal interest to the creed of acquiescence. "Ducunt volentem fata nolentem trahunt." Only in undisciplined Russia,¹ borderland of the entranced East and the stirring West, are there signs in exceptional natures of a final and reasoned rebellion against the Universal order

§ 2. Now Marcus is eloquent alike on the majesty of God and the triviality of the Creature, in the double domain of Time and Space, History and Nature.

He enlarges impartially on the transience and the sameness of the imperishable nature. He adopts without hesitation the axiom of the early Ionians, that the whole process leads to nothing, and is but the ceaseless arrangement, combination, and rearrangement of an original and unchanging substrate. With modern science he clearly recognizes that matter is indestructible, and that ingredients, whether atoms or some other primordial unit, after performing their duty in one body pass on to other posts. We have nothing but Heraclitus again with his doctrine of the flux of things and the Logos, all pervading, alone the *real*; only tinged with a deeper sadness, an intenser though still re-

¹ We may perhaps here note the extraordinary resemblance of Tolstoi to Marcus Aurelius. Whether it be insistence on moral duty, tolerance of evil, ascetic contempt of human love in all its forms, an utter inability to understand logic or follow an argument, strange and fascinated disgust of the petty details of life,—Marcus is but a Tolstoi enthroned, Tolstoi a restatement of the inspired pessimist. To the latter, all forms of legitimate affection are *παρὰ φύσιν*; yet the sexual instinct is the tyrant and torturer of the young. Not for that reason does he impugn the order of things, nor examine more closely into the redoubtable difficulty of defining "Nature."

strained sympathy with the human,—hands groping, spite of the dogmatism of the Schools, after a closer and personal relation with the source of all (*εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν κ. εὔροιεν*). The vanity of things is the perpetual theme of Marcus; but we shall attempt in the following co-ordination of his fragmentary and detached aphorisms to display how complex is his doctrine, how irreconcilable its parts.

§ 3. The many titles given to this ultimate Being show how confused the Emperor becomes when asked to define; he varies between the extreme limits of devotion to a personal God (*Ζεὺς*) and the most abstract scientific Impersonalism. It is *τὸ γεννῶν πάντα ζῶον, ὁ γεννήσας κόσμος, πόλις κ. πολιτεία ἢ πρεσβυτάτη, πόλις Διός, θεὸς, θεοὶ, κόσμος* (simply), *λόγος* generally or with addition *λόγος σπερματικός, ὅλος κόσμος, ὅλη οὐσία, τὸ ὅλον, τὰ ὅλα, εἰμαρμένον, οἱ -η, τὸ συγκλωθόμενον, ἀνάγκη, τὸ συμμεμοιραμένον* (expressing itself in *οἰκειότης θαυμασία, ἐπισύνδεσις, σύμπνοια, συμμήρυσις, σύννησις, σύνδεσις ἱερά*), and *φύσις* either absolutely or with *κοίνη, ἢ τῶν ὅλων* or *τοῦ ὅλου Φύσις, ἢ τῶν θεῶν πρόνοια, σύγκλωσις κ. ἐπιπλοκὴ τῶν προνοία διοικουμένων, λόγος ὁ τὰ ὅλα διοικῶν, ἢ πάντων πηγὴ, ἢ τὰ ὅλα διοικοῦσα φύσις, ἢ ἐκτὸς Αἰτία, τὸ τέλειον ζῶον, τὸ ἀγαθὸν κ. δίκαιον κ. καλὸν, τὸ γεννῶν πάντα κ. σύνεχον κ. περιέχον κ. περιλαμβάνον διαλυόμενα εἰς γένεσιν ἑτέρων ὁμοίων,¹ ἢ πάντα διδοῦσα κ. ἀπολαμβάνουσα Φύσις, τὸ τοῦ κόσμου ἡγεμονικόν, ἢ τοῦ ὅλου διάνοια, τὸ αἰτιῶδες.* It is not

¹ Where we wonder vaguely how “goodness and justice” have crept in as qualifications or attributes of this reservoir of physical life! Has he forgotten the wise antithesis of vi. 17: *φορὰ τῶν στοιχείων* and *ἀρετῆς κίνησις*?



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part as leaf on tree depends upon the whole and takes its meaning and its sustenance from this close connexion. To stand aloof and claim independent being is a gross sin, though unhappily (and incomprehensibly) it is possible to man, alone of living creatures. But it is needless and tedious to multiply these obvious corollaries from the Pantheistic hypothesis ; they are deduced by a sovereign logic, common to all minds and all ages.¹

¹ For example, Emerson is a more genial Marcus Antoninus, and a little but interesting book (the *Zeit Geist*, by L. Dougall) seems to represent on Canadian soil the same peculiar features of American "Transcendentalism" and Roman Stoicism. In all, there is a significant family likeness quite free from any conscious imitation. Compare Bartholomew Toyner's new vision of the Divine Nature : " He laughed within himself as he thought what a strange childish notion he had had . . . that God was only a part of things ; that he, Bart. Toyner, could turn away from good ; that God's power was only with him when he supposed himself to be obedient to Him ! . . . With the children and maidens there were pleasure and hope ; with the older men and women there were effort and failure, sin and despair. The life that was in all of them, was it partly of God and partly of themselves ? He laughed again at the question. The life that was in them all, was all of God, every impulse, every act. . . . His father's cruelty, the irritable self-love, the incapacity to recognize any form of life but his own, it was of God,—not a high manifestation : the bat is lower than the bird, and yet it is of God. . . . He saw that the whole of the Universe goes to develop character " (Marcus was not so anthropocentric !), " and the one chief heavenly food set within reach of the growing character for its nourishment is the opportunity to embrace malice with love, to gather it in the arms of patience, convert its shame into glory by willing endurance. . . . Man, rising from the mere dominion of physical law (which works out its own obedience) into the Moral Region where a perpetual choice is ordained of God, and the consequences of each choice ordained. . . . Nothing is ever outside of Him ; what happens after we have done a thing is just what must happen . . . so that we can never hope to escape the good and evil of what we have done ; for the way things must happen is just God's character that never changes. You see the reason we can choose between right and wrong, when a tree can't or a beast, is just because God's power of choice is in us and not in

It only remains to give illustrations of these tenets in the Emperor's own language, and to inquire if any system coherent and compatible with the postulate of responsible moral action can be therefrom derived.

§ 4. The world as fleeting and yet monotonous.—ii. 12 : πῶς πάντα τάχεως ἐναφανίζεται τῷ κόσμῳ αὐτὰ τὰ σώματα . . . πῶς εὐτελῆ κ. εὐκαταφρόνητα κ. ῥυπαρὰ κ. εὐφθάρτα κ. νεκρὰ (this discovery is the part of νοερὰ δύναμις, thereby set in dualism over against a visible which it despises and cannot control).—ii. 14 : Κὰν τρισχίλια ἔτη βιώσεσθαι μέλλης, etc. . . . πάντα ἐξ αἰδίου ὁμοειδῆ κ. ἀνακυκλούμενα, κ. οὐδὲν διαφέρει πότερον ἐν ἑκατὸν ἔτεσιν ἢ ἐν διακοσίοις ἢ ἐν τῷ ἀπείρῳ χρόνῳ τὰ αὐτὰ τις ὁψεται. (This indifference to Time or progress is an infallible sign of Mysticism.)—The famous (iv. 3) ὁ κόσμος ἀλλοίωσις· ὁ βίος ὑπόληψις, which somehow loses its tone of despondency in translation.—iv. 36 : Οὐδὲν οὕτω φιλεῖ ἢ τῶν Ὀλων Φύσις ὡς τὸ τὰ ὄντα μεταβάλλειν κ. ποιεῖν νέα ὅμοια.—43 : Ποταμός τις ἐκ τῶν γινομένων κ. ῥεῦμα βίαιον ὁ Αἰών.—v. 10 : Ἐν τοιούτῳ οὖν ζόφῳ κ. ῥύπῳ κ. τοσαύτη ῥύσει τῆς τ' οὐσίας κ. τοῦ χρόνου κ. τῆς κινήσεως κ. τῶν κινουμένων (“ I can imagine nothing that de-

them. . . . Something of the secret of all peace—the *Eternal Now*—remained with him as long as the weakness of the injury remained. . . . His mind was still animated with the conception of God as suffering in the human struggle, but as the absolute Lord of the struggle ; and the consequent belief that nothing but obedience to the lower motive can be called evil.”—When returning health forced him to descend from this lofty air : came “ the soul-bewildering difficulty of believing that the God of physical law can also be the God of promise ; that He that is within us and beneath us can also be above us with power to lift us up. . . . No one had told him about the Pantheism which obliterates moral distinctions, or told him of the subjective ideal which sweeps aside material delights.”

serves high prizing or intent pursuit").—v. 23 : *πολλάκις ἐνθυμοῦ τὸ τάχος τῆς παραφορᾶς κ. ὑπεξαγωγῆς τῶν ὄντων κ. γινομένων* ("sweep past and disappear").
 "Ἡ τε γὰρ οὐσία οἶον ποταμὸς ἐν διηνεκεῖ ρύσει . . . συνέχεσι μεταβολαῖς . . . σχεδὸν οὐδὲν ἐστῶς, and the customary moral of absolute indifference and contempt.
 —vi. 4 : *Πάντα τὰ ὑποκειμένα τάχιστα μεταβαλεῖ, κ. ἤτοι ἀναθυμιαθήσεται (εἴπερ ἠνῶται ἢ οὐσία) ἢ σκεδασθήσεται* (in no case any abiding connexion or sympathy).—15 : *Τὰ μὲν σπεύδει γίνεσθαι τὰ δὲ σπεύδει γεγονέναι* (impatient to come to the birth, as others too have done) *κ. τοῦ γινομένου δὲ ἤδη τι ἀπέσβη· ρύσεις κ. ἀλλοιώσεις ἀνανεοῦσι τὸν Κόσμον διηνεκῶς, ὥσπερ τὸν ἄπειρον αἰῶνα ἢ τοῦ χρόνου ἀδιάλειπτος φορὰ νέον αἰεὶ παρέχεται. ἐν δὴ τούτῳ ποτάμῳ τί ἂν τις τούτων τῶν παραθεόντων ἐκτιμήσειεν;* (Is it not as foolish as "setting one's love on some sparrow that flits past and in an instant is out of sight?")—vi. 46 : *ὥσπερ προσίσταται σοι* (as it occurs to you) *τὰ ἐν τῷ ἀμφιθεάτρῳ* and such like places, *ὡς αἰεὶ τὰ αὐτὰ ὁρώμενα κ. τὸ ὁμοειδὲς προσκορῆ τὴν θεὰν ποιεῖ* (monotony of tedious repetition "makes the spectacle pall") *τοῦτο κ. ἐπὶ ὅλου τοῦ βίου πάσχειν· πάντα γὰρ ἀνὸ κάτω τὰ αὐτὰ κ. ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν. Μέχρι τίνος οὖν;* (almost a prayer, "O Lord, how long?").
 —vi. 59 : *ὡς τάχεως ὁ Αἰὼν πάντα καλύψει.*—vii. 1 : "Ὁλωσ ἄνω κάτα τὰ αὐτὰ . . . οὐδὲν καινὸν, πάντα κ. συνήθη κ. ὀλιγοχρονία.—10 : *παντὸς μνήμη τάχιστα ἐγκαταχώννυται τῷ αἰῶνι.*—18 : *τί γὰρ δύναται χωρὶς μεταβολῆς γενέσθαι; τί δὲ φίλτερον ἢ οἰκειότερον τῆ τῶν ὅλων Φύσει;*—vii. 25 : *πανθ' ὅσ' ὁρᾶς ὅσον οὐπω μεταβαλεῖ ἢ τὰ ὅλα διοικοῦσα Φύσις, κ. ἄλλα ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας αὐτῶν ποιήσει, etc. ἵνα αἰεὶ νεαρὸς ἦ ὁ Κόσμος* (like a thrifty housewife who has no further stock



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ἐγίνετο, κ. εἰς ἄπειρον τοιαῦθ' ἕτερα ἔσται. (He betrays an unhellenic passion for "everlasting," "infinite,"—and from the permanence of Aristotle's limited globular system reverts to the perpetual series of corruptible universes scattered in infinite,—in which Ionia anticipated modern science not solely in evolution but in astronomy.)—x. 11: Πῶς εἰς ἄλληλα πάντα μεταβάλλει . . . διηνεκῶς πρόσεχε . . . μεγαλοφροσύνης ποιητικόν (but we may be allowed to wonder why contemplation of the ignoble destiny of "Cæsar's dust" should elevate the mind! This dwelling on the sordid side of Materialism is not the way to encourage Spiritualism.)—x. 27: Συνεχῶς ἐπινοεῖν πῶς πάντα τοιαῦτα ὅποια νῦν γίνεται κ. πρόσθεν ἐγίνετο.—xi. 1. In an eloquent passage on the powers of the Rational Soul. "Ἐπι δὲ περιέρχεται τὸν ὅλον Κόσμον κ. τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν κενὸν κ. τὸ σχῆμα αὐτοῦ . . . κ. τὴν περιοδικὴν παλιγγενεσίαν τῶν ὅλων ἐμπεριλαμβάνει ("encompasses and comprehends the cyclic regeneration of the Universe"); κ. περινοεῖ κ. θεωρεῖ ὅτι οὐδὲν νεώτερον ὄψονται οἱ μεθ' ἡμᾶς οὐδὲ περιττότερον εἶδον οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν· ἀλλὰ τρόπον τινα ὁ τεσσαρακοντούτης . . . πάντα τὰ γεγονότα κ. τὰ ἐσόμενα ἑώρακε κατὰ τὸ ὁμοειδές ("our fathers had no fuller vision, nor will our children behold any new thing").—xii. 21: Μετ' οὐ πολὺ οὐδεὶς οὐδαμοῦ ἔσῃ οὐδὲ τούτων τι ἂν νῦν βλέπεις οὐδὲ τούτων τῶν νῦν βιούντων. "Ἄπαντα γὰρ μεταβάλλειν κ. τρέπεσθαι κ. φθείρεσθαι πέφυκεν, ἵνα ἕτερα ἐφεξῆς γίνηται (though as he warns us, xi. 34: παντὰ μεταβολαὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ νῦν μὴ ὄν).—xii. 23. Nature strikes the hour for death; ἢ τῶν ὅλων . . . ἥς τῶν μερῶν μεταβαλλόντων, νεαρὸς αἰεὶ κ. ἀκμαῖος ὁ σύμπας Κόσμος διαμένει.—24: ὅσακίς ἂν ἐξαρθῆς, ταῦτα ὄψει τὸ ὁμοειδές

τὸ ὀλιγοχρόνιον. — 26 : (Ἐπελάθου) τοῦ ὅτι πᾶν τὸ γινόμενον οὕτως ἀεὶ ἐγίνετο κ. γενήσεται κ. νῦν πανταχοῦ γίνεται. The central idea is easy to understand; rejuvenescence through never - ceasing change; the Universe stationary in its total, flickering and kaleidoscopic in its parts. (Upon these conceptions, purely *physical* as they are, we must feel surprise when an idea of purpose, justice, or love is superinduced.)

(B) CREATION AND PROVIDENCE,—HOW FAR INTELLIGIBLE ?

ANALYSIS

§ 5. *Problem: is all predestined, or is there room for God's special interest and intervention? (will not commit himself).*

§ 6. *Everywhere traces of conflict between scientific and religious interpretation; inclines to belief in Providential government, but leaves morals unaffected by these questions.*

§ 5. As to the question of "Creation in Time," and the cessation of a Providential government, there are two interesting passages, which prove how much inclined Marcus was to cast his hypothesis into the form of a "Sceptical alternative."—vii. 75: Ἡ τοῦ ὄλου Φύσις ἐπὶ τὴν κοσμοποιίαν ὤρμησε (the "once upon a time" of fairy stories: once "the impulse of Nature" advanced nimbly to the task of world-building). Νῦν δὲ ἦτοι πᾶν τὸ γινόμενον κατ' ἐπακολουθήσιν γίνεται ("all that now happens follows in the train of consequence" = fatally), ἢ ἀλόγιστα κ. τὰ κυριώτατα ἐ. ἐφ' ᾧ ποιεῖται ἰδίαν ὁρμὴν τὸ τοῦ Κόσμου Ἡγεμονικόν; else you must deny reason to the sovereign ends which guide the impulse of the World-Soul. Such is Dr. Rendall's translation; but it puts a dilemma

instead of the sceptical alternative which seems to me lurking in this difficult passage. Now ix. 28 gives much the same language, and it is worth while to compare the sense: "Ἡτοι ἐφ' ἕκαστον ὄρμη ἢ τοῦ ὅλου Διάνοια ὅπερ εἰ ἐ. ἀποδέχου τὸ ἐκείνης ὄρμητόν. Ἡ ἅπαξ ὄρμησε, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ κατ' ἐπακολούθησιν. "Either the World-Mind imparts each individual impulse—in which case, accept the impulse it imparts; or else it gave the impulse once of all, with all its long entail of consequence" (reading *κατευτείνει*, a brilliant and plausible emendation for the text *τί ἐν τινί*, and Coraës' *καὶ τί ἐντείνῃ*, which is quite in Marcus' manner, x. 31). Now the distinction in both these obscure and perhaps corrupt sections is between a *special* and a fatal or *universal* Providence. Marcus is concerned to show in either event, resignation is the fitting attitude of the Sage. Can we allow a "knowledge of *particulars*" to God?—*e.g.* vi. 44, he puts the hypothesis of the restriction of Divine interest (or power) to the greater laws; to the larger issues of life:—*Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐβουλεύσαντο κατ' ἰδίαν περὶ ἐμοῦ περὶ γε τῶν Κοινῶν πάντως ἐβουλεύσαντο, οἷς κατ' ἐπακολούθησιν κ. ταῦτα συμβαίνοντα . . . στέργειν ὀφείλω.* Is He not eternally engrossed either in Himself or in contemplation of the Type? Here, it seems to me, Marcus tries to exempt from the operation of this rigid and indefeasible sequence certain important events in the world-order, towards which Providence still makes an exceptional and peculiar movement of interest and concern. In the latter passage he goes so far as to say, *ἐφ' ἕκαστον*, each trivial event, circumstance, casualty is Divine (as according to Christian teaching). In the former, if I may extrude the (to me) incomprehensible word



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μεστά. Τὰ τῆς τύχης οὐκ ἄνευ φύσεως ἢ συγκλώσεως κ. ἐπιπλοκῆς τῶν Προνοία διοικουμένων. (“In the gods’ work there is providence everywhere. For the action of chance is the course of Nature, or the web and woof of the dispositions of Providence,” which gives the sense admirably, though οὐκ ἄνευ does not imply identity.) Πάντα ἐκείθεν ῥεῖ, πρόσεστι δὲ τὸ Ἄναγκαιον, κ. τὸ τῷ ὄλῳ Κόσμῳ συμφέρον οὐ μέρος εἶ. “From providence (the personal and *religious* view) flows all; and side by side with it is necessity and the advantage of the Universe” (the *scientific* and impersonal), “of which you are a part.” Here there is a compromise; both views are stated in a parallel; they are neither reconciled nor allowed to quarrel, only held in leash.—ii. 11, in a celebrated vindication of Death, εἰ μὲν θεοὶ εἰσιν οὐδὲν δεινόν (κακῶ γάρ σε οὐκ ἂν περιβάλοιεν)· εἰ δὲ ἦτοι οὐκ εἰσιν ἢ οὐ μέλει αὐτοῖς τῶν ἀνθρωπείων, τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῶ θεῶν ἢ Προνοίας κενῶ; Ἄλλὰ καὶ εἰσιν, κ. μέλει αὐτοῖς τῶν ἀνθρωπείων. This is the strongest passage in the book about the gods and their part in human affairs.¹—iv. 3: Ἄνανεωσάμενος τὸ διεζευγμένον ἢ τοι Πρόνοια ἢ ἄτομοι κ. ἐξ ὅσων ἀπεδείχθη ὅτι ὁ κόσμος ὡσάνει πόλις. (“Recall to mind the alternative,—either a foreseeing Providence or blind atoms,—and all the abounding proofs that the world is as it were a city.”) We see here clearly to which side he is leaning, to the *politico-religious* conception as opposed to the *scientific*.—vi.

¹ We may remember how closely united in Quintilian’s age were the two themes for unending discussion: “whether the world was ruled by Providence,” and “whether the Wise Man should take office,”—a singular instance of the reciprocal influence of metaphysical theory and conduct.

10. Again, engaged in the contemplation of death, he almost comforts himself with the thought of atomism as a consolation for leaving the world (ii. 11): "Ἡτοι κυκεῶν κ. ἀντεμπλοκῆ κ. σκεδασμός· ἢ ἔνωσις κ. τάξις κ. Πρόνοια. ("The world is either a welter of alternate combination and dispersion," cf. Empedocles' famous dictum, "or a unity of order and Providence.") *Εἰ μὲν οὖν τὰ πρότερα, τί καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκαίω συγκρίματι κ. φυρμῶ τοιουτῶ ἐνδιατρίβειν*; ("Why crave to linger on in such a random medley and confusion?") . . . ἤξει γὰρ ἐπ' ἔμ' ὁ σκεδασμός ὅ τι ἂν ποιῶ ("Do what I will, dispersion will overtake me"). *Εἰ δὲ θάτερά ἐστι, σέβω κ. εὐσταθῶ κ. θαρρῶ τῷ Διοικοῦντι* ("I reverence, I stand steadfast, I find heart in the power that disposes all").—In iv. 27 we have a similar but more hopeful passage: "Ἡτοι κόσμος διατεταγμένος, ἢ κυκεῶν συμπεφορημένος.¹ Ἄλλὰ μὴν κόσμος· ἢ ἐν σοὶ μὲν τις κόσμος ὑφίστασθαι δύναται, ἐν δὲ τῷ Παντὶ ἀκοσμία; κ. ταῦτα οὕτω πάντων διακεκριμένων κ. διακεχυμένων κ. συμπαθῶν. ("Either an ordered universe or else a welter of confusion. Assuredly, then, a world-order; or think you the *order* subsisting within yourself is compatible with *disorder* in the All? and that, too, when all things, however distributed and diffused, are affected sympathetically.") Here Marcus almost unanswerably argues from the reason *within* to the reason *without*, from *subjective* to *objective* regularity and method.—In xii. 1 we have a parallel to the Horatian "permitte divis cetera"; τὸ μέλλον ἐπιτρέψης τῇ Προνοίᾳ.—xii. 14 is a useful passage: "Ἡτοι ἀνάγκη

¹ I accept Rendall's excellent suggestion, for the "textus receptus" is absurd; but would not οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ κόσμος be a simpler correction? Coraës' συμπεφυρμένος is also extremely probable.

εἰμαρμένη κ. ἀπαράβατος τάξις, ἢ Πρόνοια ἰλάσιμος, ἢ
 φυρμὸς εἰκαιότητος ἀπροστάτητος. (“Either fixed
 necessity and an inviolable order, or a merciful Pro-
 vidence, or a random and ungoverned medley.”) If the
 first, τί ἀντιτείνεις; Εἰ δὲ Πρόνοια, ἐπιδεχομένη τὸ
 ἰλάσκεσθαι, ἄξιον σαυτὸν ποιήσον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ βοηθείας
 (“if a Providence waiting to be merciful, make yourself
 worthy of the Divine aid,” etc.). Here again the
religious conception is uppermost; and for the single
 occasion in the whole of the volume, efficacy of prayer
 and propitiation are brought within range of philosophic
 thought. But there is no attempt to accommodate these
 views with *scientific* experience; and in the end
 Marcus leaves us in a dualism which is (as we have
 often noted) creditable to his candour and his common
 sense, if not to his logic. Finally, since his whole
speculative philosophy subserves his practice, his real
 end and aim, he proves (xii. 24) acquiescence right,
 whatever be the ultimate explanation of the Universe:
 ἐπὶ τῶν ἔξωθεν συμβαινόντων, ὅτι ἦτοι κατ’ ἐπι-
 τυχίαν, ἢ κατὰ Πρόνοιαν, οὔτε δὲ τῇ ἐπιτυχίᾳ μεμπτέον
 οὔτε τῇ Προνοίᾳ ἐγκλητέον. (“You cannot quarrel with
 chance; you cannot arraign Providence.” The govern-
 ment of the world is either accidental, and so beneath
 our notice and concern; or Divine, and therefore above
 our understanding and beyond our criticism.)



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most justly impeached. Man is born but to die; he wins self-consciousness only to discover its torture; the use of will only to feel its negative value. The whole personal philosophy of Marcus is a study of death (*μελέτη θανάτου*), a deliberate quenching of the will to live, not merely by appealing to a religious sense (*ἐπιτρέπειν τῇ Προνοίᾳ*), but by dwelling with remorseless analysis on the sordid details of life, and trying to borrow from such consideration disgust for the whole weary business. I have reserved this as an episode in our survey of his cosmology; because, while a study of his own nature convinced him, as we saw, of the value of moral and social endeavour, he discovers here nothing but arguments for Quietism and the extinction of motive and desire. The two sides of his philosophy are here in clearest contrast; *ἡ κοινὴ* and *ἐμὴ φύσις* with their incompatible impulse. The one calls us to *passive* resignation, the other, though fitfully and with no clear object, to *activity* in the smaller commonwealth; and although he protests in one place man's duty lies in the energy rather than in receptivity (*ἐνέργεια* than *πείσει*), and in another that of the two natures (*μία ἀμφοτέρων ἡ ὁδός*, v. 3), "the path is one and the same, —elsewhere he places *ὀσιότης* above *δικαιοσύνη*, and canonizes as the first virtue a theology, mystic or negative. And this on examination is nothing else but a scientific conviction of the world's vanity and unreality of phenomena as they play in idle illusion above an inscrutable ground. For Marcus and his fellows, though one be wise and another foolish, are like children sporting on the steps or in the open vestibule of a temple, the doors of which are for ever shut.

§ 2. To us it seems a truism that from the Secularist

or Christian view alike it is needful to dwell on the value and significance of life even in the humblest surroundings. Aurelius believes that a moral attitude cannot be attained until we are certain of its essential baseness or turpitude. He is, like Lucretius, a "Realist," dwelling with especial and deliberate disgust upon the contemptible origin of man,¹ and seeking to stifle the softer emotions and to tear violently asunder the physical from the sentimental side in that odd and ever marvellous complex, Love. For the body he has no language base enough. Very early he strikes the note, or rather minor chord, which is to predominate.—

ii. 2: *ὡς ἤδη ἀποθνήσκων τῶν σαρκίων καταφρόνησον· λύθρος κ. ὀστάρια κ. κροκύφαντος ἐκ νεύρων φλεβιῶν ἀρτηριῶν πλεγμάτιον.* "As with near presence of death, despise poor flesh—this refuse of blood and bones, this web and tissue of nerves and veins and arteries."—

ii. 17: *Τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου ὁ μὲν χρόνος, στιγμή· ἢ δὲ οὐσία, ρέουσα· ἢ δὲ αἴσθησις, ἀμυδρά· ἢ δὲ ὄλου τοῦ σώματος σύγκρισις, εὔσηπτος· ἢ δὲ ψυχὴ, ῥόμβος· ἢ δὲ τύχη, δυστέκμαρτον· ἢ δὲ φήμη, ἄκριτον. Συνελόντι δ' εἰπεῖν πάντα, τὰ μὲν σώματος, πόταμος· τὰ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὄνειρος κ. τῦφος· ὁ δὲ βίος, πόλεμος κ. ξένου ἐπιδημία· ἢ δὲ ὑστεροφημία λήθη.* ("In man's life, time is but a moment; being, a flux; sense is dim; the material frame, corruptible; soul, an eddy of breath; destiny, hard to define; fame, ill at appraise. In brief,

¹ vi. 13. He is the avowed enemy to the spiritualizing of the emotions; he reduces everything to its "beggarly elements," its naked truth. This is certainly logical; perhaps not unnatural to some fastidious minds who in this matter can never overcome an initial astonishment at the odd yoke-fellows, romance and passion, angel and animal; but it is as certainly not wise; *ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν συνουσίαν, ἐντερίου παράτριψις κ. μετὰ τινος σπασμοῦ μυξαρίου ἔκκρισις.*

things of the body are but a stream that flows, things of the soul a dream and vapour); life, a warfare and a sojourning" [? in an alien land]; "and after fame, oblivion." Surely it is Leopardi who is talking, and not a professed and sincere vindicator of the ways of God? "Non tali auxilio non defensoribus istis!"—Length of time is equally an illusion; from many passages in which he insists that the present moment alone is ours (without the inevitable Cyrenaic corollary!), I single iii. 7: *πότερον ἐπὶ πλέον διάστημα χρόνου τῷ σώματι περιεχομένη τῇ ψυχῇ ἢ ἐπ' ἔλασσον χρήσεται, οὐδ' ὀτιοῦν αὐτῷ μέλει.*—10: *μόνον ζῆ ἕκαστος τὸ παρὸν τοῦτο τὸ ἀκαριαῖον* ("the passing minute," this razor-edge on which we stand with the two gulfs of past and future yawning on either side.)—iv. 50: *βλέπε γὰρ ὀπίσω τὸ ἀχανές τοῦ αἰῶνος, κ. τὸ πρόσω ἄλλο ἄπειρον* (so iv. 3 coupled with *τὸ τάχος τῆς πάντων λήθης* is *τὸ χάος τοῦ ἐφ' ἑκάτερα ἀπείρου αἰῶνος.*)—v. 23: *τὸ ἄπειρον τοῦ τε παρωχηκότος κ. μέλλοντος ἀχανές ᾧ πάντα ἐναφανίζεται.* (The present is like a narrow isthmus washed by the two immeasurable oceans of that which has been and has yet to be.)—ix. 32. How short a span is life! *ἀχανές δὲ τὸ πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως ὡς κ. τὸ μετὰ τὴν διάλυσιν ὁμοίως ἄπειρον.*—xii. 7. Shortness of life, *τὴν ἀχάνειαν τοῦ ὀπίσω κ. πρόσω αἰῶνος.*—32: *πόστον μέρος τοῦ ἀπείρου κ. ἀχανοῦς αἰῶνος ἀπομεμέρισται ἑκάστῳ;* (Rendall's translation of iv. 32 in full will give the English reader the best idea of Marcus' meaning: "You can get rid (of the agitations that beset you), and in so doing, will indeed live at large, by embracing the whole universe in your view, comprehending all eternity and imagining the swiftness of change in each particular; seeing how brief is the



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heroes who are now all dust; *αὐτῆς τῆς ἐπικήρου κ. ἐφημέρου τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζώης χλευάσται* (“who have made man’s fateful fleeting life their jest”).—36. Asia and Europe, *γωνίαι τοῦ Κόσμου*, all sea, *στάγων τοῦ Κόσμου*: Athos (he is thinking of Xerxes’ achievement as a type of imperial sovereignty at its climax) *βωλάριον τοῦ Κόσμου*.—vii. 68: Sage, calm, and unruffled though wild beasts *διασπᾶ τὰ μελύδρια τοῦ περι-τεθραμμένου τούτου φυράματος* (“material integument of flesh,” where Dr. Rendall euphemizes the hard bitter sarcasm of the original; “this lump of clay hung round me which cries out for food”).—viii. 20: *τί δὲ ἀγαθὸν τῆ πομφόλυγι συνεστῶση ἢ κακὸν διαλυθείση; τὰ ὅμοια δὲ κ. ἐπὶ λύχνου.*

§ 4. We are here not far from getting annoyed with Marcus’ persistent inconsistency. It is his whole purpose to mark off and separate man from the rest of things; his virtue “proceeds by its own mysterious path, hard to be compassed and understood, to the goal of its being,” vi. 17, and has nothing to do with mere elemental change. Yet thus severed in life from the innocent and unreflecting pleasure of animals, in the moment of his greatest suspense and anxiety, he is suddenly classed with—not even animals, but with the inanimate and mechanical and automatic. That the corollary of this is resignation, peace, social work, is due

ῥύπος ὕδωρ γλοιῶδες, πάντα σικχαντά· τοιοῦτον πᾶν μέρος τοῦ βίου κ. πᾶν ὑποκειμένον. We prefer his *μὴ σικχαίνειν μήδε ἀπαυδᾶν* of v. 9; and we must remember, too, that Marcus here as elsewhere is too sincere to be consistent.—For example, how the proud self-possession of iii. 5: *Ὁρθὸν οὖν εἶναι χρὴ οὐχὶ ὀρθούμενον*, gives place to the modesty of vii. 12: *ὀρθὸς ἢ ὀρθούμενος*,—a *δευτεροῦς πλοῦς*, indeed, to the complete spontaneity of the Spirit’s choice, a “law to itself”;—to the sober advice of vii. 7: *Μὴ αἰσχύνου βοηθούμενος.*

to a mere temperamental peculiarity of the Emperor ; it is certainly not logic. To a more sanguine and fiery nature, the gladness of fighting and defiance would set him in deadly conflict against a power which, though ultimately certain to triumph, it is pure joy so far as possible to thwart. "If such a Deity bade me go to hell, to hell I would gladly go"; and on the same deep sense of the fitting rests the strange religious Atheism (or rather ir-religion) of Lucretius. If man is a bubble on the ocean of time, by all means let him follow his bent, and not do violence to his inner self. But the ascetic has nothing to say *logically* against the voluptuary ; and to prate about reason, duty, a standard of right and wrong, sympathy with the world-soul, merely irritates a good-natured adversary, who is ready to leave you with a "higher criterion," if you would only grant him a similar freedom of choice and inclination.

He on his part has no wish to depreciate or criticize the satisfaction of the Mystic ; he will not even call his inner joys, illusion or an imaginary world of pure hallucination ; he knows that everything is that,—relative, fleeting, uncanonized by any yet discovered standard ; for nothing can effectively bridge the gulf between two personalities. A man can make of the world what he likes, and no one has the right to say him "nay." "Ἐκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοῦ πληροφoρείσθω, Rom. xiv. 5 ; and although St. Paul is speaking about the unessential, where reasonable divergence and tolerance can be permitted, the maxim can be taken up into a far more serious realm. This pure subjectivity can only be corrected by the social edict which, making "for the greatest happiness of the greatest number,"—always

the aim, whether avowed or not,—takes the average of human character and aspirations, and decides that, on the whole, man is instinctively (though illogically) “*moral*”; that a general agreement on τὰ πρακτέα καὶ μὴ can be reached, even apart from religious sanction. But in Marcus’ system, the universal moral instinct, sign of essential solidarity, lies useless in the background, like Anaxagoras’ disappointing maxim; and it is not too much to say that his theology provides no argument whatever for the endeavour to right. For, viewed as Fate or the Absolute, God has no concern with such a distinction; viewed as the “Deity Within,” the divine voice within condones or enjoins the extremest vagaries of subjective impulse.

§ 5. But I am travelling somewhat beyond my immediate task; and Marcus himself might gently remind me that engrossment in the present duty (τὸ πάρον . . . ἀκαριαῖον) is the truest rule.—viii. 37. In a somewhat hard-hearted passage on mourners, he ends, Γράσος πᾶν τοῦτο κ. λύθρον ἐν θυλάκῳ, intranslatable indeed. “All comes to stench and refuse at last.”—ix. 24: Παιδίων ὄργαι κ. παίγνια, κ. πνευμάτια νεκροῦς βαστάζοντα (“children’s squabbles, or stage-farce, and poor breath carrying a corpse; is not phantom land more palpable and solid?”).—ix. 29: ὡς εὐτελῆ δὲ καὶ τὰ πολιτικὰ ταῦτα κ. ὡς οἴεται, φιλοσόφως πρακτικὰ ἀνθρώπια! μυξῶν μεστά. (“How cheap, in sooth, are these pygmies of politics, these sage doctrinaires in statecraft! Drivellers everyone!”)—x. 17: Τοῦ ὅλου αἰῶνος κ. τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας συνεχῶς φαντασία· καὶ ὅτι πάντα τὰ κατὰ μέρος ὡς μὲν πρὸς οὐσίαν, κεγχραμῖς· ὡς δὲ πρὸς χρόνον, τρυπάνου περιστροφή. (“All individual things are but a grain of millet . . . the



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ἔρπεις; πάντα ταῦτα ἐνθυμούμενος, μηδὲν μεγὰ φαντάζου (contrast Aristotle's ἐφ' ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατίζειν).

—The sum of the whole book may be found in the next section. Πῶς ἑαυτῷ χρῆται τὸ Ἑγεμονικόν; ἐν γὰρ τούτῳ τὸ πᾶν. τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ ἢ προαίρετά ἐ. ἢ ἀπροαίρετα, νέκρα κ. καπνός. (“How goes it with your Inner Self? that is everything. All else, in your control or out of it, is smoke and dust of the dead.”¹)

(B) THE USES AND METHODS OF PHILOSOPHY; THE SURRENDER OF INTELLECTUALISM

ANALYSIS

§ 6. *Settled early in life his few (paradoxical) dogmata; burnt his books; his style and unction all his own; formal doctrines, others'.*

§ 7. *Abandons speculative philosophy (not tending to edification); aims at mere practical goodness and piety; his “open mind” on all ultimate problems.*

§ 6. One or two points remain: (1) what is the kind of *science* or *method of philosophy* which has taught Marcus this theory of the world and man's place in it? (2) whether it is possible to stand out in self-will and obstruct the eternal order? because it is clear that people not born to patience and devoutness, in whose breast rages the sacred fire of discontent, will be glad

¹ I am not quite comfortable about dismissing προαίρετα into this contemptible category; it seems too sweeping even for Marcus the pessimist. I would suggest that by this word he conveys a domain proper and subordinate to the exercise of the Inner Self, by willing; and therefore really included in it, and not to be distinguished as having an essential value in itself. For to emphasize the mere inner tranquillity, released from any willing or striving, is surely too Buddhistic for Marcus? But I only suggest.

to hear what measure of completeness, distinctness, individuality, one can attain, even if it be painful, and in the end a failure. Who is the character in one of Stevenson's apologues, who, when he hears of the Ragnarök, says, "I am going off to fight for Odin"? It is the dull and meaningless omnipotence which rouses us to challenge, even to despise, the tyrant sovereign of a world so worthless. But if he demands our help and our sympathy, waits for, and will not force our loyalty, the whole horizon is changed; the meaning of everyday life becomes clearer; little things fit in to a system, which, sublime, is not "infinite." The very weakness of the power that makes "for righteousness" is the best enlisting sergeant: "Moria-mur pro rege nostro Maria Theresa." But first to the peculiar method of Marcus' inquiry. Now it is clear that early in life he was much inclined to become a student, to read and meditate much over bygone authors, and to spend over the refined subtleties of Hellenic systems a life which was owed to public duties and the common welfare. His temper, too, essentially speculative and sceptic, had its especial dangers, of which he was aware. So, after settling upon a few maxims on which to guide his life, the *δόγματα πρόχειρα*, so frequently summoned and paraded, after deciding on the supreme merits of Stoic Monism, he abandoned further search, quenched his curiosity, and burnt, if not his boats, at least his books. What self-devotion there was in this sacrifice of inclination! He may have borrowed his technical phrases from others, his doctrine of self-sufficingness from Seneca, of the "indwelling Deity" from Epictetus, his charity and forbearance from the abundant practical examples

in his childhood, from his mother, from Antoninus,¹ the old man "Cephalus" of the drama,—but in the very antinomies of his system, the bluntness and vagaries of his unpractised style, the fervour of his intense sincerity, the richness of his concrete illustration and metaphor,²

¹ Besides the long section in Book I., see vi. 30.: Πάντα, ὡς Ἀντωνίνου μαθητής.

² Some of his more memorable sayings :

"Do each act, live each day, as if it were to be your last."

"The good man is high priest and minister of the gods."

"Our human states are houses in the supreme commonwealth."

"Do even the smallest thing, mindful of the close connexion of things human and Divine."

"The bright flame assimilates all to itself, and only burns the brighter ; so should a wise man take life's pains."

"A poet of old said, O dear city of Cecrops ; and shall I not say, O beloved city of God !"

"Full already is the story of your life ; completed your public service" (*τελεία ἡ λειτουργία*).

"The finest kind of retaliation is not to become like."

"In this flux of things, he who singles out another for his love, is as if a passing swallow caught his fancy ; and, lo ! it is already out of sight."

"Things cannot influence our judgments."

"The lover of glory places his good in another's action ; the voluptuary, in his own passivity ; the wise, in his own unfettered activity."

"Why be ashamed, if lame, to mount the glittering ramparts of the City of Truth by another's helping hand ?"

"Near at hand is thy forgetfulness of all ; near, too, forgetfulness of all for thee."

"The fount of the good within will ever give pure water, if you dig about it."

"How easy for a man to be divine, and yet be recognized by none !"

"A mind free from every passion is an Acropolis."

"A fountain, if you stand blaspheming it and casting in mud, ceases not to send forth clear water."

"Come quickly, O Death ! lest perchance I forget myself."

"Even if the leaving life so be the one right action in life" (cf. "Nothing in life became him as well as the leaving it").

"On the same tree, yes ; not of the same creed."



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but that they cannot do this if, in abandoning all claim to wisdom, he strives to be simply good.

§ 7. ii. 2: "ἄφες τὰ βίβλια.—3: τὴν δὲ τῶν βίβλιων δίψαν ῥίψον! His use of philosophy is of a pure moral science, in the sense of Epictetus.—ii. 17: *Τὶ οὖν τὸ παραπέμψαι δυνάμενον; ἐν κ. μόνον φιλοσοφία. Τοῦτο δ' ἐν τῷ τηρεῖν τὸν ἔνδον Δαίμονα ἀνύβριστον, κτλ.* ("What then can direct our goings? one thing, and one alone, philosophy; which is to keep the deity within inviolate and free from scathe.")—vi. 30: *Ἀγωνίσαι ἵνα τοιοῦτος συμμείνης οἷόν σε ἠθέλησε ποιῆσαι φιλοσοφία.* "Struggle to remain such as Philosophy would have you," = as above, "Simple, good, sincere, grave, unaffected, a friend to justice, God-fearing, considerate, affectionate, and strenuous in duty."—So viii. 1: *πολλοῖς τ' ἄλλοις κ. αὐτὸς σεαυτῷ δῆλος γέγονας πόρρω φιλοσοφίας,* in a purely ethical sense.—So ix. 29: *Ἀπλοῦν ἐστι καὶ αἰδῆμον τὸ φιλοσοφίας ἔργον.*—Such practical wisdom and guidance to serenity, the sovereign good, will be embodied in short gnomic maxims, pregnant with meaning, held ready for any emergency. He learnt from Rusticus to "renounce sophistic ambitions and essays on philosophy, discourses provocative to virtue, or fancy portraitures of the sage or the philanthropist."—i. 7: *μὴ ἐκτραπήναι εἰς ζῆλον σοφιστικὸν μηδὲ τὸ συγγράφειν περὶ τῶν θεωρημάτων ἢ προτρεπτικὰ λογάρια διαλέγεσθαι, ἢ φαντασιοπλήκτως τὸν ἀσκητικὸν ἢ τὸν εὐεργετικὸν ἄνδρα ἐπιδείκνυσθαι* (cf. x. 16: "No more mere talk of what the Good Man should be. Be it!").—i. 17. He thanks the gods for saving him from pedantry: *ὅπως ἐπεθύμησα φιλοσοφίας, μὴ ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς τινα σοφιστὴν μήδ' ἀπο-*

καθίσαι ἐπὶ τοὺς συγγραφεῖς ἢ συλλογισμοὺς ἀναλύειν ἢ περὶ τὰ μετεωρολογικὰ καταγίνεσθαι. (“Thanks, too, that, in spite of my ardour for philosophy, I did not fall into the hands of any sophist, or sit poring over essays or syllogisms, or become engrossed in scientific speculation.”) Δριμύτητα σου οὐκ ἔχουσι θαυμάσαι. (“You have no special keenness of wit,” v. 5.) “Ἔστω, ἀλλ’ ἕτερα πολλὰ ἐφ’ ὧν οὐκ ἔχεις εἰπεῖν· “οὐ γὰρ πέφυκα.” Similarly, vii. 67: Καὶ μὴ ὅτι ἀπηλπίσας διαλεκτικὸς κ. φυσικὸς ἔσσεσθαι διὰ τοῦτο ἀπογνώως, κτλ., to become free, modest, social, and resigned.—v. 10: “Things are so wrapped in veils that to gifted philosophers not a few, all certitude is unattainable. Nay, to the Stoics themselves such attainment seems precarious; and every act of intellectual assent is fallible; for where is the infallible man?” (τὰ μὲν πράγματα ἐν τοιαυτῇ . . . ἐγκαλύψει ἐ. ὥστε . . . ἔδοξε παντάπασιν ἀκατάληπτα εἶναι. . . . δυσκατάληπτα . . . κ. πᾶσα ἢ ἡμετέρα συγκατάθεσις μεταπτώτος· ποῦ γὰρ ὁ ἀμετάπτωτος; So much for his semi-sceptical rejection of formal logic, of scientific study, of dogmatic certitude,—in the interests of the one thing of value, moral uprightness. For this depends on no special or curious lore, but on the realising of these few truisms which all men accept and no one practises.

(C) “SCIENTIFIC STUDY AS A MEDITATION ON DEATH”

ANALYSIS

§ 8. *Though in effect this piety demolishes reason, still insists on “scientific” knowledge and definition of each thing.*

§ 9. *One chief rule; distinguish material and cause; know world-order before ascertaining own duty.*

§ 10. *Universal Decay, the supreme lesson; scientific knowledge a comfort (even to Epicurus against pain) by showing necessary place of everything in the whole.*

§ 11. *Shortness of life alleviated by its tested emptiness; science leads to indifference and reconciles to Death.*

§ 8. But at the same time the Stoic spirit in him gave not up tamely its favourite dogma, "Redemption through Science." Throughout the whole, and with striking frequency in the later books, side by side with this pietistic demolition of reason, he insists on the need of particular and scientific knowledge, as we should call it. He is clearly of opinion that without such rational or intellectual vision no man can see things in their naked truth (or unreality), pierce to the core of things, detect their proportion and co-ordination, discover the links which somehow bind them into a harmonious whole. Just as the Platonic dialectician mounts from particular to universal, and returns "from the mount of God" with fresh faculties and clearer eyes armed with the tables of the Law, so Marcus believes that the prudent man refers each special instance to its general law, and regards every sensible or material circumstance in the light of its definition. Let him speak for himself.—iii. 11: "Always define and outline carefully the object of perception so as to realize its naked substance (*τὸ ὄρον ἢ περιγραφὴν ἀεὶ ποιεῖσθαι τοῦ ὑποπίπτουτος φανταστοῦ ὥστ' αὐτὸ ὁποῖον ἐ. κατ' οὐσίαν γυμνόν*), to discriminate its own totality by aid of its surroundings, to mark its specific attributes and those of the component elements into which it can be analysed." (*ὅλον δι' ὅλων διηρημένως βλέπειν κ. τὸ ἴδιον ὄνομα αὐτοῦ κ. τὰ ὀνόματα ἐκείνων ἐξ ὧν συνεκρίθη κ. εἰς ἃ ἀναλυθήσεται*



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—viii. 13: *Διηνεκῶς κ. ἐπὶ πάσης (εἰ οἶόν τε) φαντασίας φυσιολογεῖν παθολογεῖν διαλεκτικεύεσθαι*, where Rendall very suggestively: “To every impression apply, if possible, the tests of objective character, of subjective effect, and of logical relation.” The passage is not easy; *φυσιολογεῖν* (a word of significant frequency in later books) clearly conveys “peculiar and special nature or equipment,”—*ἰδία κατασκευή*, by no means a detailed inquiry into composition and parts by scientific and impartial induction, but rather a *deductive* pronouncement on its place in the world, viewed in the light of the prescribed teleology; *παθολογεῖν* would imply the actual experience of such a creature or thing (for *φυ.* is ideal and abstract), the particular concrete action of the rest of circumstances upon it and its change under such influence; *διαλεκτικεύεσθαι* the broadest term for reflecting survey, ascending from such experience or inward sensations and emotions to the more abstract definition or ideal contained in the term *φύσις*; in a word, a combination of the two first.—viii. 52 (a passage already quoted): “He who knows not the world-order, knows not his own place therein. And he who knows not for what end he exists, knows not himself nor the world.” *Ὁ δὲ ἔν τι τούτων ἀπολιπὼν, οὐδὲ πρὸς ὃ τι αὐτὸς πέφυκεν εἶποι.* He uses this canon to reprove his own desire of applause from those about him ignorant of their place and destiny.—ix. 25: *Ἴθι ἐπὶ τὴν ποιότητα τοῦ Αἰτίου κ. ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑλικοῦ αὐτὸ περιγράψας θέασαι· εἶτα κ. τὸν χρόνον περιόρισον, ὅσον πλεῖστον ὑφίστασθαι πέφυκε τοῦτο τὸ ἰδίως ποιόν.* “Get to the cause and its quality; isolate it from the material embodiment and survey it; then delimit the full

span for which the individuality in question can subsist." (Cf. viii. 21: *ἔκστρεψον κ. θέασαι οἶον ἐ. γηράσαν δὲ οἶον γίνεται.*)

§ 10. Full of the practical tendency of objective study, Marcus always sees things in the light of a personal relation to himself. As to him death is the constant theme of his solitary parænetic, so in all else he aims at reducing a thing to its constituent elements, and fixing the utmost limits for its persistence,—that the supreme lesson of universal decay may be derived. *Τὸ ἰδίως ποιὸν* exactly corresponds with our "individuality"; questionable and puzzling gift in a pantheistic system, and reaching in man a point most difficult of solution. He quotes with approval Epicurus, in his resolute contempt of suffering.—ix. 41: "When I was sick I did not converse about my bodily ailments, nor discuss such matters with my visitors; but continued to dwell upon the principles of Natural Philosophy" (*τὰ προηγούμενα φυσιολογῶν διετέλουν*), "and, more particularly, how the understanding, while participating in such disturbances of the flesh, yet remains in unperturbed possession of its proper good" (*ἡ Διάνοια, συμμεταλαμβάνουσα τῶν ἐν σαρκιδίῳ τοιούτων κινήσεων, ἀταρακτεῖ τὸ ἴδιον ἀγαθὸν τηροῦσα*). Like Seneca, he is tolerant of the foe, "fas est et ab hoste doceri," and seeks the common ground of all earnest and reflecting thought (*πάσης αἰρέσεως κοινόν*); common is it to every school "to be loyal to philosophy under whatsoever circumstances, and not join the babel of the silly and ignorant" (*μήδε τῷ ἰδιώτῃ κ. ἀφυσιολόγῳ συμφλυαρεῖν*). —x. 9. He unites this "scientific knowledge" or "winnowing and discerning faculty" with simplicity,

dignity: Πότε γὰρ ἀπλότητος ἀπολαύσεις; πότε σεμνότητος; πότε δὲ τῆς ἐφ' ἑκάστου γνωρίσεως, τί τε ἐ. κατ' οὐσίαν, κ. τίνα χώραν ἔχει ἐν τῷ Κόσμῳ, κ. ἐπὶ πόσον πέφυκεν ὑφίστασθαι, κ. ἐκ τίνων συγκέκριται κ. τίσι δύναται ὑπάρχειν, κ. τίνες δύνανται αὐτὸ δίδόναι τε κ. ἀφαιρεῖσθαι. ("That true understanding which apprehends each thing's true being, its position in the world, its term of existence, and its composition,—which can say to whom it of right belongs, and who can either give it or take it away.")

§ 11. x. 18: *Εἰς ἕκαστον τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἐφιστάντα, ἐπινοεῖν αὐτὸ ἤδη διαλυόμενον κ. ἐν μεταβολῇ . . . ἢ καθότι ἕκαστον πέφυκεν ὡσπερ θνήσκειν* ("by its own appointed mode of death"). This "physiology," then, comprises a study of ingredients and of fated dissolution; not only for the Sage's own life, but for each material object Philosophy is a "Meditation on Death." —xi. 1. Even the scientific astronomy of the Rational Soul, on which Seneca expatiates with such luxuriance, is but a means to view the monotony and sameness of the universe, whether in parts or process: *Ἐτι δὲ περιέρχεται τὸν ὅλον Κόσμον κ. τὸ περὶ αὐτὸν κενὸν κ. τὸ σχῆμα αὐτοῦ, κ. εἰς τὴν ἀπειρίαν τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐκτείνεται, κ. τὴν περιοδικὴν παλιγγενεσίαν τῶν ὅλων . . . θεωρεῖ*: the moral being, not the splendid prerogative of the Soul who out of this mortal abyss can rise to stellar spheres, but the fragility, the caducity, of each thing (itself included); that poor comfort which consoles the brevity of life by dwelling on its emptiness.—xi. 16: Indifference, the true philosophic aim, thus to be attained: *Ἀδιαφορήσει δὲ ἐὰν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν θεωρῇ διηρημένως κ. (μὴ ?) ὀλικῶς* ("by contemplating



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may conclude this section with his own definition (already quoted above), v. 32: τίς οὖν ψυχὴ ἔντεχνος κ. ἐπιστήμων; ἢ εἰδυῖα ἀρχὴν κ. τέλος, κ. τὸν δι' ὅλης τῆς οὐσίας διήκοντα τὸν Λόγον, κ. διὰ παντὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος κατὰ περιόδους τεταγμένας οἰκονομοῦντα τὸ Πᾶν. ("What soul is trained and wise? That only which knows the beginning and the end, and the Reason diffused through all being, which through all eternity administers the universe in periodic cycles.") Here, as must always be the case in pantheistic systems, the particular knowledge of details gives place in the end to a mere consideration of the "inbreathing and outbreathing of Brâhm," the illusion of all several existences, and the mystic sense of union with the alpha and omega of life. Science, properly so called, cannot flourish in a mind preoccupied with its own sorrowful personality, and centring its thought on the duty (and the uselessness) of moral endeavour.

(D) ON REBELLION AND APOSTASIS FROM THE WORLD-ORDER—HOW FAR POSSIBLE?

ANALYSIS

§ 12. *Has man only just so much freedom as to understand his slavery? Rebellion is possible, but only hurts the rebel.*

ὁ φυσιολογητὸς, must be in ironical apposition, "which you, the self-deemed accurate student of things, call up before your minds in array and then dismiss," *i.e.* without praetising. (There is a temptation (which I shall resist) of reading something like "puffed up with mere words" (v. 23: μωρὸς ὁ ἐν τούτοις φυσώμενος), which a scribe, increasingly familiar with φυσιολογία, may have altered.) Παραπέμπειν is itself a puzzle; it is used, i. 8, of absolute "disregard"; ii. 17, of the supreme guidance and "escort" of true wisdom; viii. 57, of the "transmission" of light. I feel certain it is used here like φαντάζη, in a depreciatory sense, "carelessly bow out."

§ 13. (*Texts on theme, "part or member or limb severed from whole ceases to be".*)

§ 14. *Individual aloofness and want of sympathy can do harm; yet, unlike lopped branch, repentant separatist can reunite (but he is never the same).*

§ 15. *Appeal based on special affinity and Thought for its kindred and counterpart; the truly moral one who takes joy in doing right.*

§ 12. Having now seen the universal law of decay, as the foundation and perpetual theme of philosophy, being aware that to Marcus "Science" meant a prejudiced and inaccurate meditation on constant elemental change, we come now to a seemingly different subject, one, nevertheless, closely connected. Is man, doomed with all else to death, able in any degree to vindicate his freedom in self-will? Is he a mere machine with the painful consciousness that it possesses just so much spontaneity as to understand its slavery? ¹—x. 5: "Whatever befalls was fore-prepared for you from all time; the woof of causation was from all eternity weaving the realization of your being and that which should befall it." "Ὅ τι ἂν σοι συμβαίῃνη τοῦτό σοι ἐξ αἰῶνος προκατεσκευάζετο· καὶ ἡ ἐπιπλοκὴ τῶν αἰτίων συνέκλωθε τήν τε σὴν ὑπόστασιν ἐξ αἰδίου κ. τήν τούτου σύμβασιν. No wonder Quietism follows as the sole practical maxim of prudence: obedience to fixed law, tintured, if you like, with a sentimental pietism, or making a virtue, resignation, of necessity. Clearly all rebellion of particulars must be fictitious: "for who hath resisted His will?" There is but one force in

¹ ii. 16: τέλος δὲ λογικῶν ζώων, τὸ ἐπεσθαι τῷ τῆς Πόλεως κ. Πολιτείας τῆς πρεσβυτάτης λόγῳ κ. θεσμῷ: an insurmountable Dualism of subject and object, *unless* religious faith come to reinforce the *duty*, by showing the *happiness*, of obedience.

the world, whatever its name and character, whether it be mere physical impulse, or (in some way unintelligible to the ordinary man) moral and “making for righteousness.” To oppose this were madness if it were not frankly impossible. Yet Marcus is constantly urging us not to attempt it: he is very anxious, perhaps over-anxious, to show that it can only harm the rebel himself, and cannot hinder God’s work, to whom even sin and Satan are contributory and essential. “Man’s soul does violence to itself first and foremost when it makes itself so far as it can a kind of tumour and excrescence on the universe” (ii. 16: *Ἵβρίζει ἐαυτὴν ἢ τοῦ ἀψυχῆ, μάλιστα μὲν ὅταν ἀπόστημα κ. οἶον φῦμα τοῦ Κόσμου (ὅσον ἐφ’ αὐτῷ) γένηται*). “Any chafing against the order of things is a rebellion against Nature (*ἀπόστασις τῆς Φύσεως*). For man is a mere part (iv. 14: *Ἐνυπέστης ὡς μέρος*).—iv. 29: “If he who does not recognize what is in the world is a stranger to the universe, none the less is he who does not recognise what is passing there” (*ξένος κόσμου . . . τὰ ὄντα . . . τὰ γινόμενα*). “He is an exile, expatriated from the Commonwealth of Reason; a blind man with cataract of the mental eye” (*Φυγὰς ὁ φεύγων τὸν πολιτικὸν λόγον, τυφλὸς ὁ καταμύων τῷ νοερῷ ὄμματι*) . . . “an excrescence who, as it were, excretes and separates himself from the order of nature by discontent with his surroundings” (*Ἀπόστημα κόσμου ὁ ἀφιστάμενος κ. χωρίζων ἐαυτὸν τοῦ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως λόγου*) . . . “a social outcast who dissevers his individual soul from the one common soul of reasoning things” (*Ἀποσχισμα πόλεως ὁ τὴν ἰδίαν ψυχὴν τῶν λογικῶν ἀποσχίζων, μιᾶς οὔσης*).—Yet these railers perform a useful function, each has a contributory function to the service of the



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βείν).¹—ix. 9. A long and interesting section in which he complains that rational beings alone can interrupt this natural law of sympathy and association between the cognate parts of kindred whole: "Ὅσα κοινοῦ τινος μετέχει, πρὸς τὸ ὁμογενὲς σπεύδει, earth to earth, fire to fire, etc., καὶ τοίνυν πᾶν τὸ κοινῆς νοερᾶς φύσεως μέτοχον πρὸς τὸ συγγενὲς ὁμοίως σπεύδει ἢ καὶ μᾶλλον. (So, too, everything that participates in the common mind-nature feels the like impulse towards kind, nay more so" (ὅσῳ γὰρ ἐ. κρείττον παρατὰ τὰ ἄλλα, τοσοῦτῳ κ. πρὸς τὰ συγκιρνᾶσθαι τῷ οἰκείῳ κ. συγχεῖσθαι ἐτοιμότερον. "The higher the nature, the readier the impulse to combination and fusion with its counterpart"). . . . Εὐθὺς γοῦν ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν ἀλόγων εὐρέθη σμήνη κ. ἀγέλαι . . . κ. οἶον ἔρωτες· ψυχαὶ γὰρ ἤδη ἦσαν ἐνταῦθα κ. τὸ συνάγωγον ἐν τῷ κρείττονι ἐπιτεινόμενον εὐρίσκετο ("on this higher plane of being a mutual attraction asserts itself, which is not present in plants (!), or stones, or sticks"). Ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν λογικῶν ζῶων πολιτεῖαι κ. φιλία κ. οἶκοι κ. σύλλογοι κ. ἐν πολέμοις συνθῆκαι κ. ἀνοχαί. "Among rational

¹ On no point is Marcus clearer than on the absolute freedom of choice, at any given moment, whatever previous life and habits may have been, whatever the seeming tyranny of circumstance: it is "instantaneous conversion," but the prime mover is not God, but man: οὐδεὶς ὁ κωλύων, ii. 9; τίς ὁ κωλύων ἐκβαλεῖν; xii. 8 and 25, viii. 47; τίς ὁ κωλύων διορθῶσαι; x. 32 and 33, ix. 11. In viii. 41, τὰ τοῦ νοῦ ἴδια οὐδεὶς ἄλλος εἴθωθεν ἐμποδίζειν. οὐδεὶς γὰρ ὁ ἀναγκάσων . . . παραβῆναι, v. 10; iii. 12, οὐδεὶς ὁ τοῦτο (εὐζωεῖν) κωλύσαι δυνάμενος.— Even Bartholomew Toyner could scarcely express himself more emphatically on this inalienable prerogative (though he may be more picturesque): "I tell you it's a love that's awful to think of, that will go on giving men strength to do wrong, until through the ages of Hell they get sick of it, rather than make them into machines that would just go when they're wound up, and that no one could love" (*The Zeit Geist*, by L. Dougall).

beings there are societies and friendship, homes and communities, and in wars, compacts and armistices.” *Ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἔτι κρείττωνων, καὶ διεστηκότων τρόπον τινα ἔνωσις ὑπέστη οἷα ἐπὶ τῶν ἄστρον.* “In the still higher orders of being, even among distant bodies, there exists unity of a kind, as among the Stars.” *Οὕτως ἡ ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον ἐπανάβασις συμπάθειαν καὶ ἐν διεστῶσιν ἐργάσασθαι δύναται.* “So that ascent in the scale of being induces sympathetic action, in spite of distance. See what we come to then. None but things possessed of mind ignore the mutual impulse of attraction ; here only does the natural gravitation disappear” (*μόνα τὰ νοερά νῦν ἐπιλέλησται τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα σπουδῆς κ. συννεύσεως, κ. τὸ σύρρουν ὧδε μόνον οὐ βλέπεται*). “Yes, but even in the act of evasion, men are caught and overtaken ; nature prevails. Watch and you will see ; sooner will you find some particle of earth detached from other earth, than man isolated from man” (*καίτοι φεύγοντες, περικαταλαμβάνονται· κρατεῖ γὰρ ἡ φύσις . . . θᾶσσον εὖροι τις ἂν γεῶδές τι μηδένοσ γεῶδουσ προσαπτόμενον ἤπερ ἄνθρωπον ἀνθρώπου ἀπεισχισμένον*).

§ 14. An almost similar reproof of the exceptional obstinacy and frowardness of the intellectual nature —xi. 20. All other elements in obedience know how to keep their place (*πειθόμενα τῇ τῶν ὄλων διατάξει . . . οὕτως ἄρα καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα ὑπακούει τοῖσ ὄλοισ . . . μέχρισ ἂν ἐκεῖθεν πάλιν τὸ ἐνδόσιμον τῆσ διαλύσεωσ σημήνη*)—“persistently retain their appointed place, until the signal for dissolution sounds their release. Fie on it that your mind-element alone should disobey and desert the post assigned” (*οὐ δεινὸν οὖν μόνον τὸ νοερόν σου μέρος ἀπειθὲσ εἶναι κ. ἀγανακτεῖν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ χώρα*).

“ Yet no violence is laid upon it, nothing but what is in accordance with its nature; yet it breaks away impatiently. For motions of injustice, intemperance, anger, vexation, fear are simply a rebellion against nature ” (οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐ. ἢ ἀφισταμένου τῆς φύσεως).

So ix. 23: “ You are part of a social whole, a factor necessary to complete the sum (πολιτικοῦ συστήματος συμπληρωτικός). Any action of yours that does not tend directly or remotely to this social end dislocates life and infringes its unity ” (μὴ ἔχη τὴν ἀναφορὰν εἴτε προσεχῶς εἴτε πόρρωθεν ἐπὶ τὸ κοινωνικὸν τέλος, αὕτη διασπᾶ τὸν βίον κ. οὐκ ἐᾷ ἕνα εἶναι). “ It is an act of sedition, and, like some separatist, doing what he can to break away from civic accord ” (στασιώδης ἐ. ὥσπερ ἐν δήμῳ ὁ τὸ καθ’ αὐτὸν μέρος διῆσται ἀπὸ τῆς τοιαύτης συμφωνίας). Here we note the convincing appeal to co-operate in a system which is imperilled or impaired by individual aloofness. The fabric, social or natural, *can* suffer hurt from such secession, as of the Roman commonalty to the Aventine; but Marcus, true to his belief that “ evil harms the perpetrator alone,” insists far more frequently upon the suicidal folly of such action, and the superb indifference of the cosmic process to the rebellion of a part (like some aggrandised Chinese Empire!). We are well aware to-day how feeble is the appeal to the reason compared with the rousing of the sympathetic emotion. Social interest depends not on fear of a revolution nor on dread of ignorance, but simply and solely upon a sense of Christian duty or a vaguer sense of compassion. Thirty years ago the generally accepted maxim was, “ It is idle to oppose the march of democracy ”; to-day, it is rather, “ we are wrong in not using our efforts to raise



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perhaps, does our author seem aware of the limits to human freedom of choice in our constitution, our predisposition of accumulated past habit. Πλεονάκις μέντοι γεγόμενον τὸ κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην διαίρεσιν, δυσένωτον κ. δυσαποκατάστατον τὸ ἀποχωροῦν ποιεῖ. ("Yet constant repetition of the severance makes reunion and restoration difficult for the separatist.") Ὁλως τε οὐχ ὅμοιος ὁ κλάδος ὁ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς συμβλαστήσας, κ. σύμπνους συμμείνας, τῷ μετὰ τὴν ἀποκοπὴν αὐθις ἐγκεντρισθεντι. ("The Branch which is part of the original growth, and has shared the continuous life of the tree, is not the same as one that has been lopped off and reingrafted.")

§ 15. After his eulogy of the ordered submission and loyalty of the elements in the above passages, we are startled (or might be if by this time we did not know Marcus' easy shifting of emphasis and turn of metaphor) to find that *only* the rational nature has true inward communion, denied to the world of inanimate objects. "The other constituents of the various wholes" (light, substance, soul) "possess neither sense nor mutual relationship (ἀναίσθητα κ. ἀνοικείωτα ἀλλήλοις). . . . But thought tends . . . to its counterpart and combines with it, and the instinct of community declines disunion" (Διάνοια δὲ ἰδίως ἐπὶ τὸ ὁμόφυλον τείνεται κ. συνίσταται κ. οὐ διείργεται τὸ κοινωνικὸν πάθος).—xii. 30. This series may fittingly be closed by a quotation (vii. 13) which shows not only the fellowship of the rational natures, but the stages on the path of its appreciation; "We are one body, and he who uses of himself the term part (μέρος) instead of limb (μέλος), the more organic connexion, has not yet attained the true inward satisfaction of brotherly love";

he obeys Law as Law, but has no conception of the harmony of the gospel, in which duty to others and pleasure to self are inextricably interwoven. *Οἶον ἔστιν ἐν ἡνωμένοις τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος, τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν λόγον ἐν διεστῶσι τὰ λογικὰ πρὸς μίαν τινα συνεργίαν κατεσκευασμένα.* (R.: "As in physical organisms the unity is made up of separate limbs, so among reasoning things the reason is distributed among individuals, constituted for unity of co-operation. *Μᾶλλον δέ σοι ἢ τούτου νόησις προσπεσεῖται ἐὰν πρὸς σεαυτὸν πολλάκις λέγῃς ὅτι ΜΕΛΟΣ εἰμὶ τοῦ ἐκ τῶν λογικῶν συστήματος.* ("This thought will strike more home if you constantly repeat to yourself, 'I am a member of the sum of reasoning things.'") *Ἐὰν δὲ ΜΕΡΟΣ εἶναι σεαυτὸν λέγῃς οὐπω ἀπὸ καρδίας φιλεῖς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους.* ("If you substitute *meros* for *melos*—part for member—you do not yet love men from your heart.") *Οὐπω σε καταληκτικῶς εὐφραίνει τὸ εὐεργετεῖν ἔτι ὡς πρέπον αὐτὸ ψιλὸν ποιεῖς· οὐπω ὡς σαυτὸν εὖ ποιῶν.* ("You have yet no certitude of joy in doing kindnesses; they are still bare duty, not yet a good deed to yourself.") We add this passage here not only because it shows man's power of gradually realizing this sense of community (a necessary corollary to our present study, "How can he set himself against it?"), but also because it points out in a profounder spirit than any other phrase or sentence of Marcus, perhaps of any ancient philosopher, the common root of altruism and egoism, so-called. The perfect man, who is truly blest, is not he who does right from a sense of duty, but who takes so much pleasure in his benevolence that he cannot do otherwise, and will not count the cost.

GENERAL CONCLUSION



GENERAL SUMMARY

Purpose; to disclose lurking antinomies in any monistic hypothesis; Aurelius substitutes religion for science; but in every section the undying conflict of the two is brought to light; Plotinus has far more logic, conviction, coherence; Stoicism (as a creed) an entire anachronism, impossible to revive; Submissiveness and Pietism uncongenial to modern thought; nothing more out of date than a divinizing of the Actual; society and the universe run on distinct lines; defiance, discovery, personality,—note of Western thought.

Aurelius attracts us by his earnest inconsistency; marks the end of moral confidence and moral effort; alleged affinity between man and the world has disappeared (Rendall's excellent appreciation); certain questions raised by the doctrine and experience of the Stoic school.

A FRESH volume on the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius may well seem superfluous. Few characters in the Imperial age are so well known; few phases of Greek or Roman thought and religion are more familiar. That complex of curious belief, odd presumption, and scientific dogmatism called the Stoic School lends itself excellently to eloquent summaries; for at first sight its outlines seem remarkably clear and well defined, its doctrines coherent and symmetrical. Every history, either of Rome, of ethics, or of pure philosophy, finds



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sylogisms which are taken for granted in every criticism of the Emperor's faith or character, as to show the lurking antinomies, doubts, anxieties which lay beneath this stern postulate of Monism; to disclose the inner conflict between those two ultimate and irreconcilable rivals—Science and Faith.

The early School, like all Greeks, fascinated into an unwarrantable teleology, had been in a way lazily and deductively scientific,—or, let us say, avowedly unselfish, objective, impartial, and unbiassed “seekers after truth,” organs of “impersonal reason”; while no fact is clearer than the intense preoccupation of reflecting minds with their own salvation and peace, than the subjectivity which was then prevalent. In Rome the latter side increased in prominence with the decay of civic sanction, and the ambitious Egoism which emerged from the nominal subordination of part to whole. The Western Stoics clung with devotion to a theoretical doctrine which in practice they surrendered. Religious faith came to the rescue of the unhappy personality which demanded a guarantee and correspondence in the objective world to the moral endeavour; which is the standing puzzle not only once upon a time in bygone antiquity, but of all earnest minds in any age. The whole question of science and faith centres round the question of a *personal* or *impersonal* hypothesis of the Universe. Stoicism, while accentuating the agonies and acute self-consciousness of the Spirit, maintained the latter with the strongest resolution. It retained the names of deities disguised as physical forces, with which men could no longer come into close personal relation. Meantime introspection and self-analysis became the fashion; and men really desired to attain, not truth, but

a way of life, and guidance in the slender practical sphere which, like Balzac's "Peau de chagrin," was almost daily dwindling.

The result might have been foreseen. With ever-increasing emphasis the *religious* aspect of the world is substituted for the *scientific*, a *personal* for an *impersonal* interpretation of the facts of life. The Emperor, in particular, combines sincerest belief in the gods with theoretic acceptance of a crude materialism. In the apparent harmony of his system, symmetrical if depressing, there is a perpetual conflict of elements which cannot be reconciled. It is, for example, impossible to say whether his Pantheism is objective and physical, or highly idealist and subjective; whether he deifies or denies the external world; whether man's affinity to God was in virtue of his fatal place in the inextricable series, or his dim, faint power to protest (standing outside not, indeed, as a new cause, but as a critic, hurried on by the rush which he may estimate but cannot avoid). The utter illogicality of moral effort in such a world has in the foregoing pages been exposed in perhaps wearisome iteration. Marcus had many teachers besides Stoicism for the practical duties of social and imperial life; and we may blame the "dogmata" of the School if he seems to us to be too ready to acquiesce, too patient of evil and tolerant of faults which it perhaps was in his power to correct. Stoicism is the refuge of a sensitive and discouraged nature, and the final Source of life takes the features of a personal deity in the unsatisfied craving for sympathy. The transition to the purer and more genial mysticism of Plotinus is easy and assured: save that in this later system there is more coherence, symmetry, and system. Dualism,

inherent in the Porch, almost disappears in the warmer light of Plato's sun, luminary of the two worlds of intelligence and of nature.

It is useless to repeat with tedious repetition the apparent commonplace (in truth, a paradox) that this peculiar attitude is a permanent posture of the inquiring Soul, or is likely to reappear to-day as the final creed of Scientific Monism. Nothing is more improbable. The conditions are absolutely reversed. The so-called religion of Stoicism is a vague, misty, and poetic attempt at self-deception; the worship of law (as Epicurus acutely reminds) is never likely to take the place of a personal relation. It reposed on two astounding postulates, which for a modern mind (nurtured on positive science, yet prejudiced in favour of moral behaviour) it would be impossible to revive with cogency: (1) belief in the beneficent teleology of Nature; (2) duty of submission. Pantheism is bad science and meaningless religion. It obscures the impassive survey of natural phenomena with the phantoms of superstition, and combines a misplaced and unreasoning reverence for the total of things, with an almost vindictive hatred of its parts. While it haunts natural inquiry with antiquated religious "taboo," it extinguishes religious feeling and the higher emotions, or conjures up a semblance of love for a supposed god, who is either sleeping or drunken,—in any case, unconscious, and in any true sense unapproachable. There is not the slightest doubt that Epictetus and Marcus did alike, by this violent clashing of anomalies, find supreme satisfaction; and that for their practical life an intellectual Pantheism (God as Thought), or a dutiful acceptance (outside the study) of the Roman "Olympus," provided



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The ways of the Social order and of the Universe lie on different planes. Man, as Huxley saw, is far more the child of the former ; he owes comparatively little to the second ; and it is certain he will rather use, transform, and investigate it for his own purpose and interest than profess readiness to accept all that betides as God's will.

It is affection rather than admiration which is evoked by the character and the self-revelation of Marcus. We love him because of the transparent anomalies of his beliefs, his unsuccessful attempts to co-ordinate two entirely opposed theories of the Universe.¹ Had he been less sincere, more academic and symmetrical, less bold in the "wager of faith," he could not have exacted a homage so unwavering from all subsequent times. First and foremost, a Roman emperor, a soul "naturally

¹ *Vide* Renan, *Averroes and Averroism*, p. 167 sq. (2nd edit. 1861) ; the two treatises of Ibn Roschd, *On the Harmony of Religion with Philosophy*, and, *On the Demonstration of Religious Dogmas*. Philosophy is the most elevated aim of human nature ; but few can attain it. Philosophical disputes are rightly prohibited, because they unsettle the simple. For their happiness, it suffices to understand what they can understand. "The special religion of philosophy is to study that which is : for the most sublime worship one can render to God is the knowledge of His works which leads us to know Himself in all His reality. The vilest action in the sight of God is to tax with error and vain presumption him who adores Him by the best of all religions. All positive tenets of religion (angels, prophets, prayers, sacrifice) are mere expedients to excite to Virtue, which the philosopher alone follows without ulterior inducement. He must not despise the simple beliefs in which he was reared ; but interpret them in the best sense. He is a heretic, and justly liable to the penalties prescribed, who inspires the people with doubts on religion, and displays the contradictions lurking in the Prophets. . . . The wise man does not permit himself a word against the Established Religion . . . and the Epicurean, seeking at a blow to destroy religion and virtue, merits the sentence of death."

Christian," he is, partly by accident, partly by conviction, a Stoic philosopher, that is, amalgam of profoundest idealism, mere positive science, and some popular belief. He is the last interpreter of this peculiar phase of thought. Not that men had become tired of the moral effort (for we cannot if we would rid ourselves of it), but because they demanded (and obtained ?) a closer correspondence in the life of God to the aspiration and the hopes of the finite creature.

In the close and sympathetic survey of Dr. Rendall, there is much I should like to notice with special attention. How admirable is this passage! xxvi.: "Belief in Cosmos, not in Chaos, is an intellectual, and still more, a moral necessity, out of which reason can only argue itself on pain of self-confusion; without it, motive and justification, or rather excuse, for continued existence fails." Yet we may add how vague and incomplete was the supposed Cosmic order of the Stoics, and how far remote was it from any moral scheme. In xxxviii. the "main dogmas of the Cynic School, . . . firmly embedded in the Stoic creed," are clearly defined: "The identification of virtue with knowledge, the autocracy and indivisibility of virtue, and the moral independence of the individual." Again, xl.: "The Cynics gave unconditional authority to the criteria of *individual* experience and will. These were direct, imperious, and valid. . . . Life in agreement with Nature was the summary of their aim, and was a formula well calculated at once to attract and to mislead disciples." xlv.: "Return to Nature, so far from implying reversion to animalism, and the reduction of man's needs to the level of the beasts, was found to involve fundamental differentiation of reasoning man from the unreason of

the brute or the inertia of matter, to place man on a unique spiritual plane, and eventually to summon him from individual isolation to conscious brotherhood with kind and harmony of will with God. These are the elements of Stoicism which have proved most permanent and universal." It might possibly be fair to add that in this respect the School was but a single manifestation of a cosmopolitan spirit (in the double sense), which prevailed after the conquests of Alexander:—preparing, half-unconsciously, its theoretical arsenal amid the disappointing turmoil of the Diadochi; and issuing, alike is Christianity and Roman "Imperialism," with its twofold current of "justice to the weaker and the slave," and the personal rights of man in the great body of Law. Perhaps, too, Stoicism only threw out half-formed suggestions, which were to be realized in the schools of Plato and the Church; for, as we shall see, the true follower of the Porch never surmounted this barrier of isolation, and never issued forth in free and eager enterprise into the larger or the lesser commonwealth.

How excellently he expresses the line of thought which conducted to this lonely watch-tower (*περιώπη*)! xlvi. : "Thus the idea of personality—of the ultimate unity of the individual will and conscience, of an *Ego* distinct from physical organism and environment—eventually dawns upon Greek thought and unexpectedly reveals a deeper dualism new to philosophy—that antithesis, namely, of spirit and flesh, of man and his material embodiment, of moral aim and realized experience, which conducts to the baffling problems of Determinism and Free-Will." There is nothing here which contradicts or denies the tendencies of the



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of thought; it depends entirely upon an alleged sense of affinity between man and the world, a deification of the concrete which is wholly inconsistent with experience and discovery, and which is probably expelled, more or less consciously, from the thoughts of all reflecting men.

How well Dr. Rendall expresses the cogency of the moral *fact*, which precedes moral theory, and is independent of it; which condemns to mere idle trifling the anti-moral diatribes of Thrasymachus and his modern imitators! lxi.: "The old sanction of civic obligation had withered in practice and been expunged in theory, but the survival of morality itself confirmed the existence of a basis, at once individual and universal. This lay in a common source of energy, not in a mere parity of individual impulse." The empirical base, the influence of Socrates and his dialectic, the puzzling sense of an integral solidarity which yet could not be realized, the curious fact that the final argument for morality to the Stoics was the personal character of Epicurus,—these points in Stoic dogma cannot be more lucidly expressed. Nor could we find more striking definition of the "main synthesis" than this, lxii.: "The world, a complete and living whole, informed and controlled by one all-pervasive energy which 'knew itself' in the consciousness of man the microcosm, and declared all nature one, coherent, rational." Whether the Stoics cordially agreed in this somnambulistic hypothesis of creation, whether the world-spirit *first* attains consciousness in human intelligence, has been much disputed; it clearly forms an essential part of modern theoretical pessimism, with which, of all Schools, Stoicism has most affinity. No better summary than the following could be found of the ethical result—

lxxiv.: “By suppression of desires the moral ideal could easily be reduced to that hard and narrow self-consistency towards which the Stoic type habitually leans; or drill itself or decline into the moral ‘apathy’ which results from restricting virtue to the sphere of intellectual and unimpassioned self-regard. This is the secret of that ‘accent of futility’ which marks the thoughts even of a writer so keenly alive to altruistic and social obligation as Marcus Aurelius.” Here is a final passage on the Stoic claim to spiritual autonomy, Determinism, and free-will, on which to attempt to improve would be an impertinence; lxxxii.: “The independence of the Will as a true first principle or ἀρχή is incompatible with its identification with the World-Soul. If . . . the highest consciousness of man represents the most complete and perfect embodiment of the World-Spirit, the saving thought of self-determination towards some transcendent, yet unapprehended, harmony is excluded. Not only is man part of the universal predestination, but the limits of that predestination are known and absolute.”

Again, how true and convincing is this summary of Stoic interpretation of the Φύσις in a “larger conception,” coloured and permeated with Eastern Monotheism, therefore wavering between naïve Phœnician worship of the *natural* process, and the *moral* and transcendental Unitarianism of the Jews. lxiv. “(The School,) in ascribing phenomena to the action of mind, attached a *moral* instead of a merely *mechanical* interpretation to each motion of the Universe: an attempt to combine the immanent and implicit (which tends to be purely physical) with the transcendent and Aristotelian, which is then in its abstraction conceived of rather

as Thought than Moral Will." Dr. Rendall uses the happiest terms in describing philosophic idiosyncrasy; of Diogenes, xlii.: "Towards all externals, his strict attitude is nonchalance, the charter of his self-sufficiency"; of Cynics generally, xlv.: "Deaf to the voices of tradition and culture, determined to isolate the individual from the society, and to flaunt the superiority of will to outer circumstance, the Cynics fell rapidly into the quagmires of ascetic bravado."—lxxxiv.: "The stalwart braggadocio of Diogenes . . . acceptant optimism of Epictetus . . . hard defiance of Cato . . . devout resignation of Marcus,"—and for our author himself, how deftly and how truly two analogies of mediæval and modern date are interwoven in civ.: "They are a *De Imitatione*, such as might have been penned amid the isolation of Khartoum."

With only two points in this admirable appreciation do I find myself somewhat diffidently in disagreement.—xlix.: "It was a cardinal assumption of Stoicism, that nature in man is identical with the nature of the Universe at large, and on that assumption it is meaningless to ask whether Cleanthes meant to prescribe 'accordance with his own individual nature,' or 'accordance with nature at large.' He would have repudiated the distinction; and whatever ethical implication might result, at least they would not depend on initial ambiguity of term." But I cannot help tracing the very obvious impotence and unhappiness of the Stoic effort and outlook to a real though unavowed sense of this contrast. I cannot read Diogenes Laertius' account of the Stoics without finding early traces, underneath a rigid dogmatism, of a profound conviction of detachment or superiority. Abundant testimony is provided



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a guide of earnest endeavour, before its doctrines, empty, eristic, and formal, were translated into activity in Rome? (2) whether the extreme familiarity of the pantheistic hypothesis, the readiness of all men at certain epochs to accept this, to the Eastern mind, one and final interpretation, is not responsible alike for the tendencies of the post-classical and Christian development,—whether this School is not rather a very subordinate episode, one of many manifestations of the sense of human brotherhood and the Divine parentage appearing everywhere with the downfall of national or civic barriers? (3) whether in all the attempts to reinforce moral effort, or explain the world's unity and sympathy, the special tenets of the School were not by far the most illogical and unsatisfactory? (4) whether Epictetus and Marcus did not derive all their moral vigour or contented submission from a religious instinct and piety, from an alliance with popular superstitions, if you will, with which the Porch-materialism was strictly incompatible? (5) whether, except in mere technical phraseology, such as frequently strikes one in Clement of Alexandria, there could be anything in common between a system in effect denying personality, human and Divine, and a Church which encouraged the humblest to believe their efforts in daily life were acceptable and approved before a loving Father's eyes? (6) whether the two interpretations of the world are not fundamentally and diametrically opposed; as Renan reminds us in a passage before referred to? (7) whether the language used of modern Pantheism is suitable only to the epoch anterior to the acceptance of Evolution, and is unintelligible to the scientific explorer of a realm in which he can discern no conscious aim? (8)

whether we have not at last got rid of the cloudy temper of mind which, confusing veneration and science,¹ worship and knowledge, surreptitiously introduces a moral purpose into the workings of mechanical law; an emotional thrill into the cold analysis of the laboratory; a vague mysticism into the survey of the starry heavens² or the expanse of ocean? Such questions cannot be finally answered here; it may suffice now that I have raised them tentatively.

¹ A good instance of this may be seen in Seneca (*Nat. Qu.* vii. 31) on comets: “*Multa . . . cognata Numini summo, et vicinam sortita potentiam, obscura sunt . . . oculos nostros et implent et effugiunt; sive illis tanta subtilitas est quantam consequi acies humana non possit; sive in sanctiore secessu majestas tanta delituit, et regnum suum (id est, se) regit nec ulli aditum dat nisi animo*”: he is clearly wavering between the objective and physical, and a mystical and inward Pantheism,—the one inevitable result of the profound opposition of the “Two Natures,” which permeates and confuses the whole Stoic development. “*Rerum Natura Sacra sua non simul tradit. Initiatos nos credimus; in vestibulo ejus hæremus!*” In his famous definition of God, *quod vides totum, quod non vides totum*, we see how keenly he feels the antithesis; how, in spite of his interest in pure science, meteorology, seismology, he is advancing, like Marcus Aurelius, to a more moral and humanitarian conception of Godhead.

² To which Kant, with all his cold sobriety, was not wholly a stranger.

APPENDIX



TRANSLATION OF PASSAGES CITED FROM EPICTETUS



CHAPTER I

THE NEW CYNISM

B. THE GIFT OF FREE WILL

(5) “As then was fitting, the gods only placed in our power the chiefest and sovereign of all (*κράτιστον . . . κυριεύον*), the right use of impressions; but the rest not in our power (*οὐκ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν*). Was it that they did not wish to? For my part, I think, had they been able, they would have placed these, too, under our control; but this was altogether beyond their power. For, being on earth and bound to such a body and such partners as we see, how was it possible in these respects not to be thwarted and hindered by things without? (*τὰ ἐκτός*).

P. 218. From this substance (*οὐσία*) of the reverent trustworthy fraternal, who can eject us? Not Zeus Himself. Nor indeed did He wish to, but placed this within my power, and gave it to me as He possessed it Himself, unthwarted, incapable of constraint or hindrance.



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(33) (seeds) to all things conceived and brought to birth upon the earth, but in chief measure to the reasonable (*τὰ λογικὰ*), because these alone can draw nigh to God as companion in familiar converse, knit to Him by reason (*συν-αναστροφῆς . . . ἐπιπεπλεγμένα*).

But shall not this assurance lift us out of our griefs and fears, that we have God as our master and father and guardian?

(49) “How can one put up with such vexations?” O Slave, will you not bear with your fellow-man, who has Zeus for his father, who like a son comes from the same bearing seeds and divine birth as yourself? (*ἄνωθεν καταβολῆς*). Will you not recollect what you are and whom you rule? Kinsmen and brothers by nature’s law, offspring of God Himself!

(Ordinance) It is to earth you gaze, to this pit of Tophet (*βάραθρον*), to these miserable ordinances of dead men; but to the laws of God, not a thought!

(289) Not mourning, not yearning over them as if he left them orphans. Well he knew that no man is bereaved of parents, but of all ever and unceasingly is the heavenly Father guardian and protector.

After (*μεχρι λόγου*) “Who believed that God was his Father, and so called Him, and performed all his tasks looking up to Him.

(reach) but if a man meet with ill-fortune, remember it is his own fault; for God has created all men for happiness, for serenity (*εὐδαιμονεῖν . . . εὐσταθεῖν*).

(311) Shall God be thus indifferent to His handiwork, to His ministers, to His witnesses? Whom, indeed, alone He uses as patterns and models to the unlearned, to prove that He is, and well administers the whole world, and is not careless of human affairs; and that to the good man, whether living or dying, there can befall nothing evil.

(338) “If you seized hold of something belonging to him, he would readily renounce it rather than follow on its account.

(fatherland) He knew well whence he has it and from whom and on what conditions. But his real ancestors, the gods and his true country, never would he have deserted these, etc.

(51) Souls, then, are so bound up and closely attached to God as being parts and fragments of Him (*ἐνδεδεμένοι κ. συναφεῖς τῷ Θεῷ ἅτε αὐτοῦ μόρια οὐσαι κ. ἀποσπάσματα*), and God feels with their every movement and impulse, as kindred and familiar to Himself;—by the side of each of us has He set an overseer (*ἐπίτροπος*), the guardian angel of every man, and set him on watch,—and this a sentinel, ever wakeful, that cannot be turned from his duty (*δαίμονα . . . ἀκοίμητον κ. ἀπαραλόγιστον*).

(52) (within) remember never to say, “We are alone”; you are not alone, but God is inside with you; and your guardian angel is there too.

(122) Have I not my seer within (*μάντις*), who has told me the substance (*οὐσία*) of good and ill?

(Thought) “What then? are not these, too, the works of Gods?” Assuredly, but not in paramount degree (*προηγούμενα*), nor as portions of the gods. But you are in special sense, you are a fragment of the divine (*ἀπόσπασμα*). In yourself there is a particle of Him. You know not that you nurture and train God, you carry Him about with you, wretched man, and do not know it” . . . when He Himself is present within, surveying all you do and listening.

(373) Give to that which rules within you its due even for a brief space. Consider what it is you have in this power (*ἡγεμονικόν*), and whence it has come to you.

(117) (your own life) But if you deem yourself a part of some great Whole, for the sake of this it behoves now to be sick, to sail, to be in peril, and be brought to uttermost want, even to die untimely. Why then are you indignant? (*ἀγανακτεῖς*). For what is man? A component part of a State, first of the City of gods and men, next of that which

is nearest to the other, which is a tiny copy of the World-Commonwealth.

(131) You are a Citizen of the world and a part of it; not one of those who serve, but those who lead. What promise then must a citizen make? To have no petty interest for himself alone, to take thought for nothing, as if he were detached (*ἀπόλυτον*).

(knowing that) this is allotted from the ordination of the World (*διατάξεως*), and the whole has to be considered before its part, and the city before the citizen.

(steward) but if he does, the lord will turn and behold him acting with haughty arrogance, and will drag him apart and cut him off. Thus, too, it happens in this greater City of the world; for here, too, is there one who is master of the house, setting to each severally his appointed duties.

(288) This World is a single State, and the substance of which it has been fashioned is one; and there is need of a certain revolution in things, and one must in his season give place to another.

(381) "has set his own will and judgment subordinate to him who guides and disposes the Whole (*ὁ διοικῶν τὰ Ὅλα*), as good citizens to the law of their State.

(74) It is circumstance that shows what men are made of. When in the future some special crisis befall, remember that God, as some stern master in wrestling, has set you to fight with a stout and vigorous rival (*ὡς ἀλείπτῆς*).

that you may become an Olympian victor; and this comes not to pass without sweat.

(272) Is he not fully persuaded that, whatever of these he suffers, God is trying and proving his mettle? When Hercules was exercised by Eurystheus, did he perform all his tasks with ungrudging cheerfulness? and when our sage is tested by Zeus Himself, shall he be ready to cry out in pain and show indignation?

(prison) not in hatred; far be it from that; for what



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thus far used Thy benefits. All were Thine, and Thou gavest them to me." What life is nobler than this? What end more blessed?

(370) I always will that rather which happens. For I deem God's will to be preferred to mine. At His feet do I lay myself, His servant and minister; with Him I desire, I yearn, I will.

CHAPTER II

(65) (subject) This is not selfish; this is the very law of the Creature's being; for his own sake he does everything (*γέγονε γὰρ οὕτως . . . αὐτοῦ ἕνεκα*). For this aim guides the Sun in heaven, and Zeus Himself. But whenever He desires to be, God of Rain or Harvest and Father of gods and men, you will see He cannot attain such functions or such titles unless He be useful for the common interest. Such, then, He made the nature of reasonable beings that they cannot obtain any of their own good things, unless somewhat be brought forward and applied to the general weal. So to do all for self becomes no longer selfish and ungenerous (*ἀκοινωνητον . . . τὸ πάνθ' αὐτοῦ ἕνεκα ποιεῖν*). For what would you expect? that a man should hold aloof from self and from his own advantage? (*ἀποστῆ . . . τοῦ ἰδίως συμφέροντος*). How, then, is there but one and the same beginning and rule of life for all creatures, to be friends with self? (*ἢ πρὸς αὐτὰ οἰκείωσις*).

(17) (go home) "and not disregard things there; for that for the sake of which he has wandered far afield, is nought but this; to study in patience, to remove from his life griefs, and laments, and cries of alas! and 'woe is me'!"

(control;) Why, then, drag upon yourself things for which you are not accountable? (*ἀνυπεύθυνος*); this is but to give oneself trouble without cause.

(71) For my nature is to tend to my own good (*πέφυκα πρὸς τὸ ἐμὸν σύμφερον*).

(161) Why are you miserable? Why does one thing happen against your will, and another when you desire it not to come to pass? Surely this is the strongest proof of unrest and wretchedness.

(this) that he must so fit and conform his desire agreeably to things that happen, that nothing can take place against our will. . . . From this will arise the great boon, we shall never be aimless, never distressed, but live our span out without grief or fear or tumult.

(158) As set free from slavery's yoke, dare to look up to God and say: "Use me, Lord, for what Thou wilt in the time to come. My will is in unison with Thee; for I am Thine.

(335) This is the road that leads to freedom, this the one riddance of serfdom, to be able from the soul's depths to say

"Lead me, O Zeus, and thou, O Fate,
Whither my portioned lot shall call."

(miserable), trembling at every report, having my ease and happiness hanging balanced on other men's letters (*ἠρτημένην . . . ἀπάθειαν*).

(contempt) Sit there, then, startled and shivering at all this, grieving, unhappy, luckless, hanging on another.

(306) For the contest set before us is not for some boxing or wrestling match . . . but for very happiness and blessedness itself.

(seek) For what is it that every man seeks? To be in steadfast calm, to be happy, to do all as he wishes, not to be controlled or thwarted.

(362) Will you not, giving up all other guides, become your own master and pupil?

(353) Leave all this. "Ah, how fair is Athens!" But to be blessed is fairer still, to be without the disease of passion, to be at rest, to feel that your life and its issues lies in no other man's control.

(368) What hinders to live lightly and with slackened rein, awaiting with easy cheerfulness all that can befall a man? (κούφως . . . εὐηνίως . . . πράως).

(Says) I will something, and it comes not to pass; I am indeed luckless.

(Says) I am free from the realm of passion and turmoil! Be not unaware, O men, that while you are wallowing in a slough of harass and perplexity about things of little worth, I alone have won my discharge from all such tumult.

(383) You must *will* it, and the wished-for result is yours; all is set right (διώρθωται). For *within* is all peril of loss, and hope of succour (ἔσωθεν . . . ἀπώλεια κ. βοήθεια).

(91) This law has God enacted, and says, "If thou desirest anything good, get it from thyself.

(158) Thou art not Hercules, to cleanse all other men's ills, nor even Theseus to rid Attica; cleanse thine own things.

(245) At once with breathless impatience we want to live like sages and do good to mankind. What sort of good? what are you about? for have you finished doing good to yourself? But you want to exhort and advise them? have you succeeded with yourself? . . . show them in your own case what sort of character the study of true wisdom makes, and don't talk nonsense! (φλυαρεῖν). (Help them by silent example) eating, drinking, yielding modestly to all, bearing patiently with all. Help them thus, and do not bespatter them with thy rheum (κατεξερᾶν φλέγμα).

(266) Recollect I have a mission; I have been sent as God's herald . . . about things good and bad, to show men how far they have wandered astray, and seek the substance of these two where it cannot be found.

(found) For in good sooth the Cynic is a pioneer (who comes to tell men what things are friends, what foes, to mankind).

(273) The Cynic must not be distracted by divers interests, but must be wholly given up to the ministry which God has



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bespend their lives, what, contrary to their duty, they neglect?"

(animals) who use without reflection the impress of sense while we follow cautiously behind . . . wherefore for them it suffices to eat and the other details (of spontaneous life), but we cannot be content with this; but we shall never attain the end for which we were created, unless we act in set and orderly fashion and agreeably and suitably to the nature and constitution of each (*ἀκολουθῶς τῇ ἐκάστου φύσει κ. κατασκευῇ*). For those creatures whose constitutions are diverse, of these, too, the functions and the ends cannot be the same (*ὧν γὰρ αἱ κατασκευαὶ διάφοροι τούτων καὶ τὰ ἔργα κ. τὰ τέλη*).

(operations) But man God brought into the world as spectator (*θεατὴν*), of Himself and of His works, and not merely to be a silent witness, but also to extol and declare His might (*ἐξηγητὴν*).

(satisfaction) but rather begin where they leave off, and stop only at the highest point where Nature has ceased in our case. And this is contemplation and attentive following and living agreeably to Nature (*κατέληξεν ἐπὶ θεωρίαν κ. παρακολουθήσιν κ. σύμφωνον διεξαγωγὴν τῇ Φύσει*). Take care then lest ye die without having obtained a glimpse of these marvels.

(148) (spectators) Such then are human affairs as in some great concourse. Most men, some to buy, some to sell; some few there are who come for the sake of the sight offered them in the assemblage, how it takes place and wherefore, and who they are who arrange it, and for what purpose.

(world) Some as brute beasts think of nought but their food.

(ambition) few there are who come a fairing in the true spirit (*οἱ πανηγυρίζοντες*) men fond of the spectacles (*φιλοθεάμονες*) what this world is? who guides its courses? of what nature is He and what His manner of governing? and what

kind of creatures we are who have issued from Him as His offering, and to what purpose framed (*ποιός τις κ. πῶς διοικῶν ; . . . τίνες ὄντες κ. πρὸς τί ἔργον ;*).

(*ἔργον*) whether we have some attachment and kindred relationship with Him or none at all? (*ἐπιπλοκὴν . . . σχέσιν*). For the rest, their leisure is in this alone absorbed, how to closely survey the fair and inquire and then quietly depart; and for their pains they are derided by the rabble.

CHAPTER III

(104) Death, what is it? an ugly mask to frighten children; turn it round and see what it really is; see, it cannot bite! This poor body must be severed from the little breath, as it was before, now or some time later on. Why be indignant if it be to-day? . . . that the world's great period may be consummated (*περίοδος ἀννήται*); for it has need of some to be now, others to wait for birth, and others already spent and done (*ἡνυσμένων*).

(179) What then? does this teaching not please you? See now, how righteousness is nothing, reverence is but folly; father, son but empty, meaningless names.

(comical) But when God bestows not on you the barest needful for life, as a general He sounds the recall to His soldiers; He sets the door open and says to you, Come hence!

(death?) Whither? not to aught that is terrible, but to the place whence you came, to things friendly and kindred (*εἰς τὰ φιλά κ. συγγενῆ*).

(us?). As much of fire as was in you will depart to join the central flame, of common clay to earth again, etc. There is no Hell nor Acheron nor Cocytus nor Pyriphlegethon, but all things are fulfilled (as Thales said) "of gods and dæmons."

(me?) O fool, you he cannot slay, only your poor corpse!

(266) This poor body of mine is nothing to me; its parts are nothing to me. Death? let it come when it will, either of whole or of a limb. Exile? and who can banish me from God's universe? Wheresoever I go there will His sun shine, there moon and stars; there too holy dreams and auguries and sweet converse with the heavenly ones.

(301) As is winter to fig, such is every circumstance from the universal order to the things consumed and destroyed in it. . . . It signifies the death of the ears of corn, not of the world. For all such is but passing of things that were into other forms of things to be; not death at all, but a settled and orderly management as of thrifty house-steward.

(οὐκ ἀπώλεια ἀλλὰ τεταγμένη τις οἰκονομία κ. διοίκησις) . . . Death, a change a shifting — more intense than any of these, from what now is to—I will not say—that which is not, but into that which is not *yet* (εἰς τὸ νῦν μὴ ὄν), “shall I then cease to be?” asks the anxious inquirer. Yes (οὐκ ἔσει), but in your place will arise something of which God's order has need. For you, too, came into being not at a moment when you desired, but when the world wanted you.

(Domitian) Put on no tragic airs about a matter so simple: say what is really the case, “now is it the due season for me to restore the material to the constituents again who provided it. What is there terrible in that? what part of the world is going to perish?” (so Epictetus is consoled in death by reflecting on the indestructibility of matter, and the thought that it will all go on just as well without him).

(34) We are in some sense kindred of the gods above, and from thence have we come here. Set us free to return thither again; let us sometime at least be set clear of these manacles that weigh us down, so closely are they attached! (ἄφες λυθῆναι ποτε τῶν δεσμῶν τούτων). Men! wait for God in patient expectancy! When He gives the word of command and releases you from this service, then shall ye go,



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pleasurable, but with painful feelings (*ἡσθέντας . . . ἀλγησάντας*).

(loneliness) Ah! wretched that I am! Hera. have I lost and Athène! no son or kinsman have I any longer!

(*εἶναι*) None the less is it right to make preparation beforehand against this peril, to be able to be content with oneself alone (*αὐτὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀρκεῖν*), to live in converse with oneself; just as Zeus communes with his soul in solitary majesty, and is at rest and peace with himself, and bethinks him of his rule and governance what sort it is, and is in deep thoughts fitting his nature.

(251) For ye see that our emperor gives us, as it would appear, peace lasting and secure, because there are no more wars or battles, no great robber-bands or pirates to infest the sea; but a man may in any season travel on his way unharmed, and sail from east to west.

(319) One who is a slave straightway prays to heaven that he may be released a freeman. "If I be enfranchised," he says, "at once there shall be a great calm. I care for nobody, to all I speak on equal terms. I go wheresoever my fancy leads, I come back at will."

(Russia) Then he has been set free: and forthwith, not having wherewithal to sustain life, he seeks one whom he may flatter and fawn upon, and suffers miseries worse than death itself: he has fallen into the trap, a fresh slavery far more grievous than the earlier (*ἐμπέπτωκεν εἰς δουλείαν πολὺ τῆς προτέρας χαλεπωτέραν*).

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